LANCER: NPCS REBAKED

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SPECIAL THANKS TO the many pilots and GMs on the PilotNET Discord server who provided feedback and stories from their games during playtesting.

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Welcome to *Lancer: NPCs Rebaked.* This supplement is intended to give GMs an assortment of NPC options that can replace or exist alongside those found in the *Lancer* core rulebook, with an eye towards transparency, ease of use, readily graspable tactics, and memorable challenges for their players to be pitted against.

To forestall any confusion, it should be immediately clarified that this is not an official first-party *Lancer* supplement. *Lancer: NPCs Rebaked* is a third-party supplement based entirely on my own personal experiences and ideas regarding *Lancer's* NPC design, and it should not be considered official material or a secret "*Lancer* 1.5 edition" or anything along those lines.

This supplement is, in part, comprised of material taken from the *Lancer* core rulebook with my own changes and adjustments made, in various places and in various degrees. All material reproduced here is done so with permission from Tom Bloom and Massif Press.

So what does this supplement entail, exactly?

Lancer: NPCs Rebaked features the following:

- New NPC Structure Damage and Overheating tables, designed for those NPCs that aren't standard enemies but also aren't Ultras either, made to be simpler and more streamlined.

- NPCs Rebaked. All 30 of the *Lancer* core rulebook's mech NPCs, from the Ace to the Witch, have been given overhauls designed to make them more cohesive, give them more sharply-focused tactical and gameplay identities, and smooth out what I feel to be rough and unintuitive edges.

- Bespoke Grunts. Rather than a template, these Grunts are bespoke units designed to be Grunts from the outset. Simple and straightforward, these units require no construction or choosing among 30 different NPC classes.

- The Revised Veteran Template. A new look at the Veteran template, which now gives NPCs the chance to take unique class-specific traits to represent their experience and training.

- The Revised Ultra Template. Designed with greater dramatic impact and interaction in mind, this new Ultra template broadens the selection of powerful Ultra traits, weapons, and systems to enable a wider variety of playstyles, while avoiding frustrating blanket immunities that can discourage players from attempting various tactics.

Each of these elements is designed with an eye towards modularity; you can use them together or pick individual components that you wish to use while ignoring the rest, and you can use them as a replacement for core rulebook material or alongside it. For example, you could use bespoke Grunts and also make use of the core rulebook's Grunt template, or you could choose not to use the new Structure Damage and Overheating tables if you prefer the viscerality of the default version. You can even use rebaked NPCs alongside their core rulebook versions if you want. None of these components require the use of others in order to function.

Throughout this supplement, I will offer my personal thoughts on the various components, both in order to set them down on paper for my own satisfaction as well as explaining to you, the reader and

prospective GM, what I've decided to change and why, in the hopes that it makes it easier to discern what exactly has changed and more transparent in terms of things like tactics and mechanics. Maybe you'll agree with these decisions and maybe you won't, but the important thing is that you have a clear picture of things so you can come to your own informed conclusions.

This project, in particular the NPC rebakes which make up the majority of it, share some common goals in terms of a broad, systemic design framework.

- Everything in this supplement is designed to cleave as closely to the original designs as possible. I'm not looking to radically reinvent NPCs into completely new configurations, for example, though this does sort of happen in a couple of places. I want the barrier between knowing how the core version of an NPC works and how the rebake version works to be as low as possible, and the same applies to things like Grunts and templates.

- NPC rebakes are designed with an eye towards standardizing various NPC stats such as HASE score, Heat Cap, Speed, Armor, etc. In some cases, NPCs have large, seemingly-arbitrary jumps in various stats at various tiers, suddenly gaining +5 Sensors, or having a stat that rapidly scales upwards, or gaining Armor where previously they had none. These revised versions smooth these progressions out where I feel it's warranted so they feel less arbitrary and more intuitive for GMs as the NPCs go up in tier (instead of blindsiding unfamiliar GMs with "oh wait, I didn't know this went up that much").

- Along with this, many instances of NPC to-hit numbers have been more tightly bound across the board. A lot of NPCs have a degree of accuracy baked into their attacks which is frankly excessive (such as melee weapons, which can never be affected by things like cover, sporting an inherent +2 Accuracy). This can often lead to things like Evasion, E-Defense, taking cover, and inflicting Impaired feeling devalued and less important. Tom himself has even noted this in the past, which is why the NPC classes found in modules like *No Room For a Wallflower* have much lower average to-hit values. As such, I've refactored a lot of these numbers into something intended to promote both more counterplay (taking cover or applying conditions like Impaired) and teamwork (encouraging NPCs to help one another out with Lock On, flanking enemies, destroying cover, etc).

- Some NPCs gain multiple attacks as they go up in Tier (i.e. making two attacks at a time at T2 and three attacks at a time at T3). Due to this, these NPCs very often result in extreme power spikes at higher tiers as their damage output multiplicatively scales. Because of this, I've removed this multi-attack capability outright from almost all NPCs that have it, such as Operators, Ronins, and Specters. Instead, their weapons will scale by increasing in damage as most other NPCs do, bringing them more in line with the majority of the NPC compendium and making it easier for GMs running games at higher tiers to account for their inclusion in enemy compositions.

So you can keep these in mind as you go through the rest of the supplement, where I'll have more specific commentary on individual elements.

It's also worth noting that there are a number of *Lancer's* core rulebook NPC catalogue which I didn't decide to revise, such as various other templates, NPC classes like the Squad and Monstrosity, etc. For this particular project, I chose to focus on elements that I felt would be most common and broadly

applicable to the majority of *Lancer* games, which naturally includes the NPCs themselves, along with templates that are most commonly reached for (and most commonly critiqued, debated, and modified by GMs and their groups). Other templates, while I certainly have thoughts on them, are less pressing matters, and plus it can start to feel like "well if I did *this* then shouldn't I also do *that*," and part of finishing a project is knowing when to go "okay I'm finished." These are the parts that interested me the most, so these are the parts I decided to focus on.

And in some cases, I feel that other people have already done extensive work with these other elements, and if I were to attempt to do the same thing I would simply be retreading already trodden ground. Squads, for example, are an NPC type that people have been putting their own spin on for years now, and there are plenty of alternate versions out there for people interested in trying them out.

In fact, here are some other NPC-related projects for *Lancer* that you can check out:

- The GM's Guide to Building Encounters, by OWACS Ender. Every GM has to start somewhere, and while *NPCs Rebaked* is probably more likely to appeal to more experienced *Lancer* GMs who've already taken the core NPCs for countless spins and want something new (though newer GMs can absolutely make use of them), this guide to encounter building gives aspiring GMs a solid foundation in the basics of encounter creation, from the narrative side to the tactical, and the OPFOR creation guidelines listed here hold just as true for rebake NPCs as they do for standard ones. https://owacsender.substack.com/p/the-gms-guide-to-building-lancer

- Prototype Pattern Groups, by Valkyrion. A collection of a dozen new NPCs along with a new template (the Brigand) that looks to poke at and expand on the Pirate template in a way that's less damage-oriented (Splinter Rounds go home). It also has a selection of optional rules for things like NPC heat, NHP cascading, and its own alternate Structure Damage and Overheating rules. https://valkyrion.itch.io/prototype-pattern-groups

- GMS Crisis Catalog, by Maria Lopez. Though this supplement contains new player-facing content, it also has an extensive selection of GM-facing material, including new Structure Damage and Overheating rules (you may be sensing a pattern here), several assortments of new NPCs including rules for things like Squadrons and Gunships, and even comes with an associated mission that GMs can use for it as well. https://esbionarshadow.itch.io/gms-crisis-catalogue

- Squad Kits, by Reconus. One of the NPC classes that *NPCs Rebaked* doesn't really touch on is the Squad, and one of the reasons why it doesn't is because I feel that the Squad is an NPC deserving of more attention than a simple rebake. Another reason is because someone's already gone and done that. With 66 optionals spread across 22 different Squad Kits, this supplement goes into extensive detail such that any similar efforts on my part would be a pale imitation by comparison. If you want to bring more infantry into your combats, this is the place to find them. https://reconus.itch.io/lancer-squad-kits

- Raid Bosses - A Guide for Lancer, by Finaljas90. One thing that *Lancer's* NPC roster doesn't really handle, whether it's in the core rulebook or this supplement, is "solo bosses," opponents that are meant to serve as a meaningful combat challenge in and of themselves. Ultras are strong, sure, but they don't really accomplish this goal. This supplement consists of a design document detailing the means and methods by which you might create such an enemy to

challenge your players, taking inspiration from games like ICON, Gubat Banwa, and Log Horizon, as well as MMOs, along with four pre-generated example bosses you can use right out of the box. https://finaljas90.itch.io/finaljas90s-raid-bosses

Some final notes before getting into the main material: at various places throughout this supplement, you will see the term **OPFOR** used. OPFOR is a military acronym that stands for "Opposing Force," and is typically used during training exercises to represent the side that's taking on the role of the enemy. As it's used here, OPFOR indicates the NPC side in *Lancer's* tactical combat, comprising the enemy composition that the PCs are pitted against.

Additionally, mention is made (if only in one place) of the Intangible status, first formally codified in *Field Guide: The Karrakin Trade Baronies.* Intangible works thusly:

STATUS: INTANGIBLE
Intangible characters can move through obstructions such as characters or terrain but not end their turns in them. They, their actions, and any effects they own or control can only affect other **Intangible** characters and objects. Tangible characters can move through **Intangible** characters and objects but not end their turns inside their spaces and can't affect them in any way. Intangible characters cannot capture points or count for zones (for **sitreps**) and don't count as adjacent to tangible characters.

Effects that are already active on a character when they become **Intangible**, such as statuses, remain active, but effects that require an ongoing interaction between two characters or objects (like traps or force fields) end. If a mech becomes **Intangible**, its pilot remains **Intangible** for the same duration.

Lastly, you may be (rightly) wondering...why "rebake?" Rebake in this case is a reference to the ASW-G-11 Gundam Gusion Rebake from *Gundam: Iron-Blooded Orphans*, which is a revamped and modified version of the ASW-G-11 Gundam Gusion, hence these revamped and modified NPCs are also "rebakes" themselves. As to where that term comes from in the first place, it's ostensibly a reference to roasting coffee beans, which explains why the even further modified version of the Gundam in question is the ASW-G-11 Gundam Gusion Rebake Full City (full city being a particular type of coffee roast). I just think it's neat.

New NPC Structure Damage and Overheating Tables

By default, NPCs have **1 Structure** and are destroyed when they reach **0 HP.** They also have **1 Stress** and become **Exposed** when they exceed their **Heat Cap** instead of making an overheating check.

When NPCs gain additional **Structure** and **Stress** (such as from templates), NPCs will instead use the following Structure Damage and Overheating Tables, which are different from the ones that PCs use, but otherwise follow the standard rules for structure damage and overheating.

The exception to this is NPCs with the **Ultra** template, which use the same Structure Damage and Overheating Table that PCs use (*Lancer*, p. 80-81).

NPC STRUCTURE DAMAGE TABLE

5-6 - Glancing Blow	The damage is notable but the effects are minor, and the NPC is **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.
2-4 - System Failure	The hit was sufficient to disrupt the NPC's systems, forcing them to pass a **Hull** check or become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become **Impaired** instead. If the NPC was already **Impaired**, they automatically fail this check.
1 - Staggering Hit	The NPC chooses; either they become **Stunned** until the end of their next turn, or they become **Impaired** and **Slowed** for the rest of the scene. If they choose the second option, it can't be chosen again for the rest of the scene.
Multiple 1s - Target Destroyed	The NPC is destroyed.

NPC OVERHEATING TABLE

5-6 - Emergency Shunt	The NPC overheats but emergency safeties kick in, and they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.
1-4 - Instability	The NPC becomes **Exposed** as their reactor becomes unstable, causing emergency vents to visibly open and weakening their armor.
Multiple 1s - Meltdown	The NPC suffers a **reactor meltdown** at the end of their next turn.

Designer's Notes: One of the more frustrating occurrences in Lancer is when an NPC that you were counting on to be an important and evocative element of the OPFOR gets hit, rolls a System Trauma result on the Structure Damage Table, and loses their one and only weapon and/or crucial system. How many times have your Elite Demolishers lost their hammer? How many Veteran Engineers have had their turret system destroyed? And once that happens, even though NPCs still have an assortment of basic actions to fall back on, it simply isn't the same. Nobody puts a Demolisher on the table going "hell yeah, I'm gonna use this guy to Lock On to so many people."

I'm a bit dubious of System Trauma in general. While I understand the fantasy of blowing parts off of mechs in combat, in practice players largely have two main responses to the prospect of losing weapons or systems; either their build doesn't care, or they take ablative equipment specifically for the

purpose of ignoring it when it happens (such as the Armament Redundancy system introduced in *Dustgrave*). It's a random outcome that no one seems particularly eager to engage with, because it offers no real interesting outcomes...either it's something that doesn't affect you one way or the next, or it's something that affects you so harshly that you'd rather pay an SP tax just to avoid it.

But for NPCs, System Trauma can be even more punishing. Many NPCs only have a single weapon or defining system in their base loadout, something that's critical to their functionality and thus renders them largely inert if it's destroyed. The fact that this can happen on a random roll means you can't reliably predict whether it will happen or not, which means some fights can quickly be left toothless all because someone lost their gun.

For some groups, this sort of randomness is appealing, but I personally find it less satisfying. Hence, one of the main elements of this revised Structure Damage Table is that it eschews System Trauma completely, replacing it with the Jammed condition (potentially). This still means that NPCs can have their capabilities neutralized when taking structure damage, but only temporarily. Direct Hit, which results in either being Stunned or destroyed, has also been changed to a result that's less prone to random destruction and/or Stunned-induced death spirals.

The end result of this is that more advanced NPCs such as Veterans and Elites are less prone to being randomly neutralized. You can still roll multiple 1's and have an NPC get destroyed outright, but overall this makes these sorts of NPCs a little bit more of a persistent threat that won't be as unceremoniously dispatched or turned into ambulatory Lock On dispensers.

Ultras, the closest NPC equivalent to PC-grade mechs, still use the same tables that PCs do. This gives them a bit more distinctiveness, highlighting that they're operating on a different level from even other advanced NPCs, and gives the PCs the satisfaction of being able to still blow parts of them off.

While you could argue that having the ability to lose components in this way or end up Stunned makes Ultras potentially weaker in that regard than, say, an Elite, it's worth noting that in both the core rulebook as well as this supplement, Ultras benefit from the **Legendary** trait which lets them roll all structure damage and overheating checks twice and take either result, take multiple turns each round, are more easily able to clear debilitating conditions, and have other traits and abilities which hook into things like weapon or system destruction.

It's worth keeping in mind that because of the way these rules work, it's possible to stack templates on an NPC and create an Elite Veteran Commander which will have 4 Structure and Stress, while still using these new tables. What does this mean? Unlike the table PCs and Ultras use under these rules, these specific tables do not escalate consequences based on remaining Structure/Stress; that is, there's no equivalent to the Direct Hit result getting measurably worse (including potentially resulting in destruction) the more Structure that the NPC loses.

This can, in theory, mean that such a non-Ultra multi-Structure/Stress NPC becomes harder to kill than intended, having to either reduce their Structure/Stress to 0 or count on them rolling multiple 1's. However, unlike Ultras, these NPCs won't benefit from things like the Legendary or Juggernaut traits, and are thus more vulnerable to debilitating debuffs like Jammed, Stunned, or Exposed, and as they roll more dice for these checks, the chances of those debuffs impacting them in a serious way goes up.

NPCs Rebaked

Ace
Striker

Tactics: Aces are very fast and reactive strikers that can use **Barrel Roll** to mitigate dangerous or high-damage attacks. This is most effective against heavy weapons. Attacking from the air means many of their attacks will be able to more easily draw line of sight and fire around cover, allowing them to deal consistent damage, and they have weapons and abilities that benefit from **Lock On** such as their **Missile Launcher.** Relatively low **HP** makes Aces vulnerable to things like **Reliable** damage, and **Barrel Roll** can be disrupted by abilities such as tech attacks that cause conditions like **Slowed.**

OPFOR Notes:

- Highly mobile and with flight capability, but be aware that flying usually means it won't be able to take cover.
- The highest any character can fly and still be able to attack is **10 spaces high**, which is sufficient to put it out of the range of many close-range weapons, but not protect it from mid-to-long range ones.
- Works well alongside allies that can **Lock On** to enemies to enhance its damage-dealing capabilities, and against enemies without many long range options; keep its flight ceiling in mind in case no PC is capable of actually threatening it in return.

Ace
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	12	8	8	-2	+3	+1	+0	0	5	10	10	1

Base systems:
SSC Flight System
System
The Ace can count any or all of their movement as **flying.**

Missile Launcher
Main Launcher
+1/2/3
Smart
Range 10, Blast 1
4/6/8 explosive damage
Attacks made with this weapon against targets that have **Lock On** ignore cover.

Barrel Roll
Trait, Reaction, Recharge 5+
Trigger: A ranged or melee attack hits the Ace.
Effect: The Ace performs a barrel roll, flying **6 spaces** in any direction and causing the attack to miss. This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke **reactions.** This reaction can't be used if the

Ace can't move (e.g. if it's **Slowed** or **Immobilized**).

Optional systems:
Strafe
Trait, Quick Action
1/round, the Ace can fly spaces equal to their **Speed** in any direction, automatically dealing **3/4/5 kinetic damage** to one character below or adjacent to the path taken, plus any number of additional characters below or adjacent to the path taken who have **Lock On** (though **Lock On** must be consumed if used this way).

Missile Swarm
Main Launcher
+1/2/3
Loading
Burst 5
3/4/5 explosive damage
This weapon deals double damage to characters with **Lock On**, and does not affect allied characters (bonus damage is not doubled).

Full Throttle
Trait, Reaction, Recharge 5+
Trigger: An enemy in line of sight moves.
Effect: The Ace moves **10 spaces** in any direction and gains **soft cover** until the end of their next turn.

Countermeasures
System, 4 Heat (Self), Limited 1
Whenever the Ace would gain a condition from a hostile character (**Impaired, Slowed**, etc), they may spend a charge from this system to ignore that condition. The character that inflicted that condition then gains **Lock On.**

Emergency Jettison
Trait
Whenever the Ace is destroyed while **flying**, they instead move up to their **Speed** and immediately land, remaining at **1 HP.** All of the Ace's systems and traits (but not weapons) are then disabled.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	15	8	8	-2	+4	+2	+1	0	6	10	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	18	10	8	-2	+6	+3	+1	0	7	10	14	1

Designer's Notes: The Ace is an NPC largely defined by its ability to fly. While that's certainly a very potent capability, it doesn't really do much to inform what the Ace, as a tactical combat unit, *does*,

which is mainly shoot missiles at people and occasionally dodge their attacks with Barrel Roll. Functional, but not very fleshed out.

I decided to lean into two elements to give the Ace more of a gameplay identity. The first was informed by its Missile Swarm optional, which gains power against targets with Lock On, something I spread out into other parts of its kit such as its baseline Missile Launcher as well as Strafe. I'll tell you now, you're going to see a lot of Lock On synergies like these throughout the rebakes, as a way to encourage enemies to cooperate for increased effect in a telegraphed fashion.

And actually, let's talk about the Missile Launcher for a second. In the core rulebook, this had Seeking, a very powerful tag that lets you ignore both cover and line of sight with a weapon. What I find this encourages with Aces is less zooming across the battlefield from an aerial position and more loitering behind LoS-blocking obstructions to fire missiles unimpeded. As a unit that can fly high into the Z-axis, gaining LoS on targets, particularly with a Blast weapon, should be easy. I think Seeking is both redundant here and encourages a playstyle I don't particularly favor for the Ace, which is why I removed it. Getting to ignore cover against targets with Lock On is a consolation for losing Seeking. While this may not overly impact the weapon's relationship to hard cover, it does allow the Missile Launcher to more efficiently bypass soft cover from things like smoke grenades, talents, and terrain.

The other element of focus is, simply, that the Ace is a slippery bastard. Barrel Roll is an iconic ability of the Ace, catching newer players off-guard and requiring overlapping tactics to neutralize even for those that are more familiar with it. Emergency Jettison, playing into this, now additionally gives Aces an extra life, even if it's one stuck on the ground at 1 HP. Sometimes an extra body on the field makes all the difference to a sitrep.

There's one survivability element to the core rulebook Ace which I'm not a fan of, and that's the Chaff Launchers optional. This does something which I'm very much against, which is taking an NPC's deliberate weakness and patching it over. Part of the intended counterplay for Barrel Roll is to neutralize it with the Slowed condition, which is most commonly available to PCs through tech attacks such as Fragment Signal. When you fight Aces, you learn how that trick works. Chaff Launchers letting the Ace use Barrel Roll against tech attacks themselves takes that lesson, a thing you want the players to learn, and goes "nah just kidding. Boy, don't you feel stupid?"

In my experience, this sort of thing is a good way to discourage players from trying to engage with these sorts of weaknesses and tactics and instead simply default to brute force. You want players learning how to interact with NPCs in ways beyond just shooting more guns at them, and they should be rewarded for doing so.

Countermeasures is the replacement for Chaff Launchers. It does several things to change this dynamic...for starters, it's Limited 1, which means it can only ever occur once and then it's used up, and secondly, using it requires the Ace to take a chunk of heat. Things which cause NPCs to take heat are an element I looked to incorporate throughout the rebakes in general, to give more texture to them and enable more opportunistic moments for hackers and heatgunners to capitalize on, and in this specific case, forcing the Ace to take an additional 4 heat in exchange for letting it shed a troublesome condition serves as a reasonable consolation prize; the player still accomplished something, forcing the Ace to burn a limited resource and take a bunch of heat they probably didn't want to. Next time, that bastard won't be so lucky.

Aegis
Support

Tactics: Aegises are tough and defensive support units. They are most effective when positioned so that their **Defense Net** can cover as many allies as possible, as the Aegis itself is slow-moving and can't reposition quickly. They can also protect their allies from the effects of **Impaired** and **Slowed** while being immune to those conditions themselves.

OPFOR Notes:

- Slow-moving, using **Boost** can provide additional mobility to get into position quicker but will prevent the activation of **Defense Net** without any way to gain additional actions or turns.
- Protecting against multiple attacks can quickly cause heat to build up, requiring the use of **Stabilize** to cool down.
- Works well in tandem with allies that prefer not to move, and works well against hostile sources of **Impaired** and **Slowed** such as **Fragment Signal.**

Aegis
Mech, Support

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	7	10	10	+0	-2	+2	+2	2	3	10	10	2

Base systems:
Light Laser
Main Cannon
+1/2/3
Range 8
3 energy damage + 2/3/4 burn

Defense Net
System, Full Action, Shield
The Aegis spreads a powerful, shimmering repulsion shield over a **Burst 2** area. While active, the Aegis is **Immobilized**, but all ranged, melee, and tech attacks against characters or objects within the affected area that originate outside the area receive **+2 Difficulty** and cannot result in **critical hits**; whenever an attack receiving this **Difficulty** misses, the Aegis takes **2 heat.** Characters within the affected area may attack characters within and outside of the area normally.

Allied characters within the affected area also gain **Immunity** to **Impaired** and **Slowed**, and clear these conditions when they enter the area if they already have them.

This effect lasts until the Aegis ends it as a **protocol** or is destroyed. If the Aegis exceeds their **Heat Cap**, becomes **Stunned**, or becomes **Jammed** while the shield is active, the shield deactivates and can't be reactivated until the end of the Aegis' next turn.

Regenerative Shielding
Trait
The Aegis has **Immunity** to **Impaired** and **Slowed**, and can’t be critically hit.

Optional systems:

Focused Shielding

Trait, Reaction, 1/round

Trigger: An allied character within your **Defense Net** area is hit by a ranged or melee attack.
Effect: That character gains **resistance to all damage from the attack**, then the **Defense Net** is deactivated.

Guardian

Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the Aegis for **hard cover.**

Ring of Fire

Trait

Any hostile characters that start their turn inside the area affected by the **Defense Net** or that enter it for the first time in a round take **2 heat** and become **Shredded** until they leave the area.

Remote Projector

Trait

When the Aegis activates **Defense Net**, it may choose a free space within **Range 5** and generate a **Burst 2** area centered on that space instead. All other effects of **Defense Net** remain the same while this remote field is active (e.g. the Aegis is **Immobilized**, etc).

HA Blackwall System

System, Full Action, Limited 1

The Aegis generates a pitch-black wall of blinkspace **5 spaces high** covering a **Line 10** area starting within **Range 5.** All spaces must be free. The wall blocks line of sight, effects, and attacks (but not movement), and provides **hard cover.** Characters that start their turn in the wall or who enter it on their turn roll **1d6.** On a **4+** they are removed from play until the end of their next turn, when they reappear in a free space of their choice within **Range 10** of the wall. If there are no free spaces, they return when a space becomes free. The wall lasts until the Aegis ends it as a **quick action**, or is destroyed. When it ends, characters remaining in blinkspace reappear.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	8	12	10	+0	-2	+3	+3	2	3	10	12	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	9	14	10	+0	-2	+4	+4	3	3	10	14	2

Designer's Notes: The core rulebook Aegis does something I find very awkward, which is that it gives its defining ability, the Defense Net, a recharge value. Recharge abilities are capricious and fickle. Every Lancer GM probably has a story about the time the Recharge 6+ Short-Cycle Lance got to fire off three turns in a row, while some Recharge 4+ ability spent the entire fight on cooldown.

I think it's a bad idea to have the Aegis run this particular risk, especially give that it's a slow unit, which means it's very easy to wind up activating the Defense Net because you think it's about to become useful, only for the fight to wind up happening somewhere else, forcing GMs into a sunk-cost dilemma...do you deactivate the shield and hope you don't botch the recharge rolls, or do you stay put and hope the Aegis doesn't wind up a non-factor in the fight?

Naturally the biggest changes to this version of the Aegis center around Defense Net, which largely works the same only without being a Recharge system, and also now having several methods that players can use to overload the shield. It's more interesting if the Aegis loses their shield due to actions that the players took than losing it because your lucky d6 decided that it was too tired to roll anything about a 3 that day.

The Defense Net itself now has the potential to accumulate heat the more attacks it winds up deflecting, which (along with the shield shutting down if the Aegis overheats) provides another potential avenue for players to disable it if none of them happen to have brought anything that can do so by inflicting Jammed. This only kicks in if the Defense Net is mitigating incoming attacks...if attacks are still slipping through, then there's less of a need for players to focus on disabling the shield in the first place.

Speaking of big, the Aegis is the first, but certainly not the last, NPC rebake that will be getting a size increase. The core rulebook NPC roster is predominantly focused on Size 1 units, with anything bigger being relatively uncommon, which is pretty different from the selection of PC mechs which are much more varied in size. Being bigger adjusts how the Aegis plays in a variety of ways, making it harder to be displaced with grapples or rams, giving it better synergy with its Guardian optional, and also making it harder for the Aegis to loiter behind obstructions on top of its Defense Net. Besides, it's not "thank you *Small* Sal," now is it?

I have no idea why the Light Laser scales the way it does, with a flat packet of energy damage and then burn scaling by tier. I thought about changing it, but honestly I don't think it matters that much, so I just kept it as it is. It's a funky little gun though, that's for sure.

Archer
Controller

Tactics: Archers excel at inflicting "choice punishment" on their enemies – they make characters choose between taking certain actions or letting the Archer attack them. Use Archers to lock down mobile or hard-hitting PCs or to cover for more vulnerable allies. Keep in mind that Archers are vulnerable to having their ability to use reactions disabled, such as being **Jammed** or **grappled.**

OPFOR Notes:

- Deals consistent and repeated **Striker**-level damage through a combination of multiple attacks and **Reliable** damage. Consider this when planning how many other damage-dealing allies to add alongside them.
- **Reliable** damage is especially effective against high **Evasion** targets and those benefiting from **Invisibility.**
- Works well in combat scenarios where enemies are forced to move in order to achieve objectives, and against unarmored enemies that rely upon other forms of overlapping defenses to mitigate damage.

Archer
Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	8	8	8	-1	+2	+2	-1	0	5	15	11	1

Base systems:
Light Machine Gun
Main Cannon
+2/4/6
Reliable 3/4/5
Range 10
5/7/9 kinetic damage

Suppress
Trait, Quick Action, Reaction
The Archer chooses a target within line of sight and **Range 10**: they become **Impaired** and the Archer gains the **Moving Target** reaction.

This effect lasts until the Archer uses **Moving Target**; the target damages the Archer or leaves the Archer's line of sight; the Archer is **Stunned, Jammed,** or destroyed; the Archer chooses a new target for this action; or, the Archer ends it as a free action.

Moving Target
Reaction
Trigger: The Archer's **Suppress** target starts to move.
Effect: The Archer makes an attack against them with the **Light Machine Gun.** This attack interrupts and resolves before the triggering movement.

Superior Sentinel
Trait
The Archer gains **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks made as reactions (e.g., **Overwatch**).

Optional systems:
Covering Fire
Trait, Quick Action, Reaction, Recharge 4+
The Archer creates a **Blast 3** area within **Range 10** and line of sight, and gains the **Got Your Back** reaction. This area lasts until the end of the Archer's next turn or until the Archer creates a new area, and this reaction can be taken as many times per round as it is triggered.

Got Your Back
Reaction
Trigger: A character in the **Covering Fire** area makes an attack.
Effect: The Archer may attack that character with the **Light Machine Gun.**

Impending Threat
Trait
Moving Target's trigger now includes the target taking any action that does not target the Archer.

Flush Out
Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 4+
The Archer chooses a hostile character within **Range 10**: that character must either move their **Speed** in a direction of the Archer's choice, or allow the Archer to attack them with the **Light Machine Gun.** This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke **reactions.**

Blinding Shells
Trait
1/round, after the Archer makes a successful **ranged attack**, they may force their target to pass an **Engineering** save. On a failure, the target only has line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn.

Fire and Maneuver
Reaction, Trait, 1/round
Trigger: An enemy character in line of sight moves.
Effect: The Archer may **Boost.** If they end this movement within **Range 10** and line of sight of the triggering character, that character takes **3/4/5 kinetic damage.**

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	10	10	8	-1	+3	+3	-1	0	5	15	13	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	12	12	8	-1	+4	+4	-1	0	6	15	16	1

Designer's Notes: The Controller that hits like a Striker. The Archer is a pretty solid and effective punishment controller with an extremely clear gameplay plan, and in that regard I think it's pretty well designed.

Its optionals are a real mess though. Ironically, the problem I have with the Archer is that, for a reaction-based unit, it simply has too many reactions in its optional systems. Four out of five Archer optionals are additional reactions, most of which are another variation of "the Archer threatens someone into doing/not doing a thing, then shoots them if they don't do/do that thing. You don't need that many! It's a pain in the ass to keep track of, and honestly just not that interesting.

So the biggest part of this rebake was finding a more dynamic set of optionals to play with. It still has some additional reaction-based stuff there, but it's more streamlined and consolidated. Covering Fire is the big holdover, of all the "shoot guys more" reaction optionals it's the one I like the best, carving out a zone on the map and punishing anyone within it who acts up. Otherwise, Impending Threat can simply be folded into Moving Target, while Flush Out serves as a more proactive form of choice punishment for the Archer to play with rather than a purely reactive one.

Fire and Maneuver continues the trend you'll see repeated elsewhere throughout these rebakes of me taking identical NPC abilities (in this case, Rapid Response) and replacing them or turning them into more customized, class-tailored versions. I think it's nicer when NPCs have completely unique abilities, even if some of them work similarly, as opposed to the same ones repeated across multiple NPCs, though I admittedly make an exception for bread-and-butter things like Guardian. The rebake Archer's version of Rapid Response largely works the same as before, but it brings the Archer's affinity for Reliable damage into prominence by encouraging you to stay within shooting distance of whoever triggered it.

Assassin
Striker

Tactics: Assassins are true experts at punishing single characters. Use **Assassin's Mark** to choose a target, and then make the most of the Assassin's high speed and **Leap** to close the distance. **Assassin's Mark** gives **Resistance** to the marked character's damage, but can't be swapped until the marked character is destroyed, so consider this when selecting targets. Without optional systems like the **"Devil's Cough" Shotgun**, Assassins only have access to melee attacks and are fairly vulnerable to sustained damage.

OPFOR Notes:

- Mobile and surprisingly tough against their marked target, but can be focused down quickly by other characters if they aren't careful.
- **Kai Bioplating** is most useful on maps with hazardous terrain, pits, and vertical elements to take advantage of.
- Works well in conjunction with allies that can apply conditions like **Shredded** or **Immobilized**, or who can knock targets **Prone**, to set up the **Heated Blade** for double damage.

Assassin
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
15	12	8	7	+0	+2	+1	-1	0	6	10	10	1/2-1

Base systems:
Heated Blade
Main Melee
+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
Threat 2
4/5/6 kinetic damage
This weapon deals double damage to **Prone, Shredded, Immobilized,** or **Stunned** targets (bonus damage is not doubled).

Assassin's Mark
Trait, Quick Action
The Assassin chooses a character in line of sight. For the rest of the scene, these effects apply:

- It has **Resistance to that target's damage.**
- Damage it deals to that target cannot be reduced.
- It gains **+1 Accuracy** on all saves forced by that target, and the target makes all saves forced by the Assassin with **+1 Difficulty.**

The Assassin can only choose a new target if the current target is destroyed.

Leap
Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Assassin flies **6 spaces** in any direction but must land on a surface. When they land, characters adjacent to the Assassin must succeed on an **Agility** save or be knocked **Prone.**

Kai Bioplating
Trait
The Assassin gains **+1 Accuracy** on all **Agility** checks; additionally, they climb and swim at normal speed, ignore **difficult terrain**, and, when making a standard move, can jump horizontally up to their **Speed** and vertically up to half their **Speed** (in any combination).

Optional systems:
"Devil's Cough" Shotgun
Heavy CQB
+0/1/2
Loading, Knockback 2
Range 3, Threat 3
10/15/20 kinetic damage

Spinning Kick
Trait, Quick Action
The Assassin chooses a character next to them: they must pass a **Hull** save or be pushed **4 spaces** away from the Assassin and knocked **Prone.**

Shroud Projector
System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Assassin sets off a charge, creating a **Burst 3** concealing shroud. The Assassin gains **soft cover** within the affected area, and characters other than the Assassin fully inside or outside the area cannot draw line of sight into or out of the area. Characters partially within the area are not affected. The **Heated Blade** deals double damage to characters inside this area (as though they were **Prone** etc). This effect lasts until the end of the Assassin's next turn, or until the Assassin uses this system again.

Explosive Knives
System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Assassin throws an explosive knife at a character within **Range 5**, making a ranged attack at **+2/4/6**. On a hit, the knife embeds itself in the target and explodes at the end of their next turn, dealing **4/6/8 explosive damage** in a **Burst 1** area and forcing the struck target to pass a **Hull** save or become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

Transfix
Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Assassin jams their blade into a vital part of an adjacent character: that character must pass an **Engineering** save or become **Stunned.** While **Stunned** this way, the Assassin becomes **Immobilized.** This effect lasts until the Assassin and the target are no longer adjacent or until the target takes **structure damage.**

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	15	9	7	+1	+3	+1	+0	0	7	10	12	1/2-1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	17	10	7	+1	+4	+2	+0	0	8	10	14	1/2-1

Designer's Notes: I really like the Assassin. It's got a fun kit that encourages setting up combos, the Assassin's Mark serves as a unique tactical threat, and it has a lot of maneuverability which encourages more dynamic map layouts to play around in.

That said, there's no reason the Heated Blade needs a base +2 Accuracy, come on now.

Beyond that, and beyond Assassin's Mark now imposing Difficulty against saves given how many saves the Assassin has all over its kit, the biggest changes are once again in the optionals. Explosive Knives has been moved from a Limited 3 system, something that requires more mental overhead on the GM's part to keep track of, to a recharge-based system, and it brings with it some Shredded application to better combo with the Heated Blade and give it more of a reason for being in the Assassin's kit.

Both Shroud Projector and Sap are abilities that you'll see elsewhere among core rulebook NPCs. In the rebake, only the Assassin has Shroud Projector which feels more appropriate for a close-range striker than for the long-distance Sniper.

As for Sap...Stunned is one of those debuffs that a lot of people have very strong feelings about, mainly negative ones. Nobody really likes being told to skip their turn. As an NPC optional, I'm very rarely interested in using Sap. It's potentially very strong, but not in a very unique or interesting way. Transfix retains the ability to apply Stunned, but makes the implementation a little more dynamic by actually giving players additional ways to interact with it beyond having a buddy Stabilize it off of you.

One might ask, why is the "Devil's Cough" Shotgun an Assassin optional? Sure, it hits like a truck, but it doesn't really have anything to do with the rest of what the Assassin does, it doesn't tie in to the mark or the blade or anything like that, so what's it there for? The answer is that it's there to be cool as hell. It's an iconic weapon, you're allowed to color outside the lines sometimes.

Assault
Striker

Tactics: The Assault is a straightforward, damage-dealing striker that emphasizes the importance of taking cover. Equipped to do good damage at decent range, they want to flank their opponents or drive them out of cover in order to maximize their effectiveness. **Hunker Down** can increase their survivability, but leaves them less able to maneuver in return.

OPFOR Notes:

- A versatile, well-rounded NPC effective at standard ranges, but be aware they are still a **Striker** and not simply a generic "filler" unit; it is a damage dealer, and should be treated as such.
- **Hunker Down** is an extremely valuable defensive tool that can be used every round, even though using it results in being **Slowed.** This drawback can be mitigated with friendly assistance.
- Works well when paired with allies that can destroy cover or that can move enemies out of cover.

Assault
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
15	8	8	8	+1	+1	+1	+1	1	4	10	10	1

Base systems:
Heavy Assault Rifle
Heavy Rifle
+0/1/2
Range 10
6/8/10 kinetic damage
This weapon gains **+1 Accuracy** against targets that do not have **cover.**

Combat Knife
Auxiliary Melee
+1/2/3
Threat 1
4/5/6 kinetic damage

Hunker Down
Trait, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: An attack hits the Assault, but damage hasn't been rolled yet.
Effect: It gains **Resistance** to all damage from the attack, but becomes **Slowed** until the end of its next turn.

Optional systems:
Rank Discipline
Trait
The Assault gains **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks, checks, and saves while adjacent to at least one allied

character with the **Mech** tag.

Underslung Grenade Launcher
Auxiliary Launcher
Arcing, Knockback 2, Loading
+1/2/3
Range 10, Blast 1
4/6/8 explosive damage

Micro-Missile Barrage
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
The Assault launches a **Line 10** volley of micro-missiles. All characters within the affected area must succeed on a **Hull** save or take **6/8/10 explosive damage.** On a successful save, they take half damage. Characters who do not have **cover** make this save with **+1 Difficulty.**

Fix and Flank
Trait, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: A character who doesn't have **cover** from the Assault is successfully attacked by an allied character.
Effect: The Assault may target them with **Overwatch** using the **Heavy Assault Rifle**, dealing half damage.

Shocktrooper
Trait
When the Assault uses **Hunker Down**, instead of the normal effect, they may instead **Boost** and gain **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks, checks, and saves until the end of their next turn.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	10	9	8	+2	+2	+2	+2	1	4	10	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
21	12	10	8	+3	+3	+3	+3	1	4	10	14	1

Designer's Notes: This is the NPC that inspired this entire project, the very first one I did. Originally, I was only interested in revising the Assault to address my personal issues with it. Then I started poking around at the other NPCs, and now here we are.

So what are my issues with the Assault? The Assault is an NPC that, through no fault of its own, often winds up being overused by GMs newer to *Lancer* who aren't as familiar with things. They see the Assault as "a generic guy with a gun" and decide that it must be a filler unit, despite the fact that the Assault is a hard-hitting Striker and therefore not really "generic" in the sense they're expecting. The core rulebook doesn't really do anything to dispel this impression either, and so "don't treat Assaults like filler units" is a lesson a lot of newer GMs end up learning the hard way.

On top of this, the Assault is *boring.* It isn't boring because it does nothing interesting, though that's definitely part of it, it's boring because the Assault is just generically good...it has a ranged weapon that hits hard and has Reliable, it has a built-in Brace-like ability in Hunker Down that it suffers no penalty for using, its statline is good with no real standout weaknesses...the Assault is an NPC that has no real concrete gameplay identity, no tactical leaning, no gimmick or schtick, and it also has no real friction points to it, nothing that defines it in terms of what it's bad at.

That Reliable damage is a third factor behind my dislike of the core rulebook Assault. Only three core NPCs have Reliable damage baked into their base kit, and so you would think that three out of 30+ wouldn't be that big of a deal, but the problem is that those three NPCs (the Archer, the Assault, and the Rainmaker) are all very "normal, generic-seeming" NPCs. They're just guys with guns and missiles. The end result of this is that a lot of GMs bring them into a lot of encounters, and this tends to result in a lot of fights seeing high amounts of Reliable damage being flung around, which devalues things like cover or having high Evasion.

So the cornerstone of my Assault rebake was twofold: remove the Assault's Reliable damage, and give it an actual gameplay identity of some sort, something to make it stand out as more than just a generic guy with a gun, so that GMs might be more mindful of how to incorporate them into an OPFOR.

And this is the result. I leaned all the way in to the "no Reliable damage" idea by completely inverting it, turning the Assault into a unit that actively fares worse against targets in cover, which in turn encourages players to seek out cover and encourages the GM to more proactively look for flanking opportunities rather than just firing away and letting Reliable damage pick up the spares. Hunker Down now comes with a built-in drawback as well (taken from the Demolisher's similar Dig In reaction, we'll cover what happened to that later) so that forcing an Assault to brace against an attack feels like more of an accomplishment.

Of course, the Assault's optionals now play into this identity as well to help solidify it further. The Underslung Grenade Launcher gains some Knockback to help shove people out of cover, while Micro-Missile Barrage becomes much more dangerous against targets out of cover, especially those relying on defenses like Invisibility against which save-based effects are particularly useful. It is, however, a Full Action now, because I've always felt that getting to combo it with a Skirmish is a bit excessive.

If you're wondering if this means that I'm against NPCs having access to Reliable damage, the answer is no. My issues with Reliable NPCs in the core rulebook comes down to the specific NPCs which have it, not that it exists at all. As you've already seen (assuming you're reading through this in order), the Archer still has their Reliable damage, which I felt was appropriate given their punishment-based gameplan...it makes the threat of being shot by the Archer more serious if there's no way you can just luck out and be completely missed.

I've also added Reliable damage to several other NPCs throughout the rebakes, maintaining the same number of baseline Reliable NPCs as the core rulebook, simply shuffling around where you find it in the hopes of making its inclusion in an OPFOR a more thoughtful, deliberate consideration.

While we're here, let's talk about one of the most overlooked bits of the Assault's kit, the Combat Knife. The Combat Knife exists in a weird spot for the Assault, because *Lancer* by and large isn't a game that rewards having a "backup melee weapon" much of the time...if you have multiple weapons, you tend to want them to exist in similar range brackets or have some form of cooperative synergy, and the Heavy

Assault Rifle and Combat Knife have neither. As a result, a lot of GMs basically ignore the knife in favor of keeping the Assault at a distance where it can shoot while staying out of melee and benefiting from cover, which is a very sensible and reasonable thing to do.

Beyond the knife serving as a means to absorb unfortunate System Trauma results, I actually do think that point-blank barrages with both the rifle and knife are surprisingly effective even using the core rulebook version of the Assault...yes, you suffer Engagement penalties for shooting while adjacent to someone, but the rifle has Reliable to offset missing...but the rebake version also supports this as well. The Engagement penalty is countered by the rifle's Accuracy against targets without cover, and a lot of the time you're in someone's face they probably won't have cover.

This tactic is further supported by the Shocktrooper optional, which lets you turn Hunker Down from a defensive ability to a gap closer and attack booster, letting you set up a bayonet charge via off-turn movement and granting additional Accuracy for both attacks.

All of this is to say that while an argument could be made that the knife seems like a superfluous element of the Assault's kit and it would simplify things to simply remove it and focus on its identity as a mid-range rifleman, I actually appreciate the extra depth it lends the unit in terms of tactics and playstyle options, and so I've elected to keep it for that reason. Barraging this way does mean the Assault can potentially do more damage than you might expect it to at a glance, but this brings me all the way back to the original point of this rebake: the Assault is a Striker, and should always be treated as such.

Barricade
Controller

Tactics: Barricades are at their best when locking down fast-moving targets that rely on their mobility. They can also use **Mobile Printer** to create hard cover for allies (or for themselves) or to block off portions of the map.

OPFOR Notes:
- Low damage but equipped with multiple ways to interfere with enemy mobility.
- A high **Sensors** allows for effective use of tech actions such as **Lock On, Invade,** or **Drag Down.**
- Works well in combat scenarios where enemies need to move in order to achieve objectives, and paired with allies who benefit from having protective cover on demand.

Barricade
Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	6	9	10	+0	-2	+1	+3	2	3	15	12	2

Base systems:
Graviton Lance
Main Cannon
+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
Range 10
2/3/4 energy damage
On Hit: The target is **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Mobile Printer
System, Quick Action
The Barricade prints a **Size 2** cube in a free area within **Range 3.** The cube provides **hard cover** and is a single object with **20 HP** and **Evasion 5.** The Barricade can only have one cube deployed at a time; if a new one is deployed, the first one dissolves.

Drag Down
System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3
The Barricade makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, they take **2 AP energy damage** per space that they voluntarily move until the end of their next turn.

Bulwark Mods
Trait
The Barricade ignores **difficult terrain** and **dangerous terrain.**

Optional systems:
Spike Barrier
Trait
The cube printed by **Mobile Printer** is covered in piercing spikes; the first time in a round any

character besides the Barricade moves adjacent to it, that character takes **2/3/4 AP kinetic damage** and must pass an **Agility** save or lose all their remaining movement as though they had become **Engaged.**

Extrudite
Trait
The Barricade can print two separate cubes at a time with **Mobile Printer** instead of one, and cubes no longer dissolve when new ones are printed, but **Mobile Printer** is now **Recharge 5+** when used; it automatically **Recharges** if all cubes are destroyed.

Seismic Repulsor
System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Barricade emits a seismic pulse from one of its printed cubes, creating a **Burst 3** area around it. All non-flying characters within that area must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **3 spaces** back from the cube and knocked **Prone.** Allied characters affected this way (including the Barricade itself) are not knocked **Prone.** The cube is then destroyed.

Hunger/Pursuit Limpets
System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Barricade rapidly prints and deploys a field of tiny, mobile mines in a free **Size 4** area adjacent to them. The affected area becomes **difficult terrain**; additionally, hostile characters that enter the area for the first time in a round or start their turn there must pass a **Systems** save or be **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Titan-Snare Drone
System, Drone, Quick Action, Limited 1
Snare Drone (**Size** 1/2**, HP** 5/8/10**, Evasion** 10/12/14**, E-Defense** 10/12/14**, Tags: Drone**)

This drone can be printed and deployed to any free adjacent space. When hostile characters move into or start their turn within **Range 3** of the drone, it emits a pulse, and they become **Immobilized** until the drone is destroyed.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	7	11	10	+1	-2	+1	+4	2	3	15	15	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
22	8	13	10	+2	-2	+1	+5	2	4	15	18	2

Designer's Notes: Something that I think is important to consider when it comes to *Lancer* NPC design, and this can apply to other games with NPCs that work similarly, is "what does this NPC look like with absolutely no optionals whatsoever?" If you decide to use this NPC without any extras, what sort of gameplay are you looking at?

In the case of the Barricade, what you're looking at is two completely passive traits, a gun that slows

people, and the ability to make a cube on a Recharge 5+.

I'm not gonna put too fine a point on it, this kind of stinks. A bare-bones Barricade is going to spend 90% of its time shooting people with the Graviton Lance and maybe tossing out basic Invades, and while that's functional and all, it's very boring. To add to that, Mobile Printer, which is perhaps the most evocative and iconic Barricade ability, is on a recharge system (remember what I talked about with the Aegis) as well as being awkward to use due to it being a protocol...you have to plunk cubes down at the start of the Barricade's turn, which means using it to provide cover for allies on demand is that much harder to do. Combine this with the Barricade's slow speed, and Mobile Printer can often end up more of a gimmick than a useful feature.

So one of the biggest changes to the Barricade rebake is adjusting its base systems to be more interesting and dynamic. I chose to ditch Shock Plating, giving it some more HP to compensate for the loss of resistance, and replace it with Drag Down. Taken from its optionals, Drag Down is the Barricade ability I reach for more often than not, and given what the Barricade specializes in, I feel like it's a strong contender for deserving to be moved into its base kit. This loss of Resistance does make it generally more fragile, even with the additional HP, but given its mid-to-long range weapons and systems and ability to generate hard cover on demand, I feel this is a fair trade, and one that helps differentiate it more from controllers such as the Hive.

As for Mobile Printer, it's no longer a recharge ability and also no longer a protocol, and also no longer has to be placed adjacent to the Barricade. Overall, this makes it significantly easier and more flexible to use, with the caveat that you can only ever have one cube out at a time (barring optionals like the revised Extrudite, of course). Cutting down on the ability to flood the map with deployables helps make things easier for the GM to manage as well.

In terms of optionals, this version of the Barricade has more stuff that hooks into its cubes, bringing that element into more prominence than it had in the core rulebook. This is something I try to do throughout the rebakes, looking for opportunities to hook optionals into base abilities to enhance or augment them in interesting ways.

It does make the NPCs a bit more "self-referential" in places, and that can make cross-classing components from one NPC to another a little trickier...for example, the Spike Barrier trait is kind of useless to put on an NPC that doesn't also have the Mobile Printer system to go along with it...but given that cross-classing is entirely optional and makeshift to begin with, I'm okay with that, and there are still plenty of other self-contained traits and systems you can freely make use of.

Bastion
Defender

Tactics: Bastions are hardy defenders that use their bulk and size to protect themselves and nearby allies. Use **Friendly Interdiction** to defend against distant enemies, like artillery and snipers, or to set up favorable engagements at closer range. Bastions (and their wards) are vulnerable to **Knockback** and forced movement, as these effects break many of their abilities.

OPFOR Notes:

- High armor but only modest HP makes them more resistant to low-damage **Auxiliary** weapons, but more vulnerable to high-damage **Heavy** or **Superheavy** weapons, or weapons with **AP.**
- With only close-to-mid range weapons itself and low **Sensors**, protecting backline units means it won't have many chances to contribute to combat.
- Works well when operating at mid-range to closer distances, alongside allies that can benefit from its protective abilities without needing to remain mobile, such as ranged **Strikers.**

Bastion
Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	8	8	8	+2	-3	+0	+2	3	4	5	10	2

Base systems:
Rotary Grenade Launcher
Main Launcher
Arcing, Loading
+1/2/3
Range 8, Blast 1
4/6/8 explosive damage
An adjacent allied character can reload this weapon as a **quick action.**

Heavy Assault Shield
Heavy Melee
Knockback 1
+1/2/3
Threat 1
3/4/5 kinetic damage
On Hit: Target must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone.**

Friendly Interdiction
Trait, Protocol
The Bastion and one allied character adjacent to it gain **Resistance** to all damage dealt by one character within line of sight. The Bastion may choose a new allied character or a new character to gain **Resistance** from as a **protocol.** The allied character loses **Resistance** if they break adjacency.

Guardian
Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the Bastion for **hard cover.**

Optional systems:
Near-Threat Denial System
System
When characters within **Range 3** attack the Bastion or a character being protected by **Friendly Interdiction**, they take **2/3/4 AP explosive damage** before rolling.

Siege Guardian
Trait
Allied characters gain **Resistance** to damage from **Blast, Burst, Line,** and **Cone** attacks while they're adjacent to the Bastion.

Fearless Defender
Trait, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: An allied character in **Range 5** of the Bastion takes damage, and the Bastion isn't **Immobilized, Slowed, Stunned,** or otherwise unable to move.
Effect: The Bastion moves to a space adjacent to the triggering character and takes the damage instead. The Bastion may then immediately use **Friendly Interdiction** on the triggering character.

Deathcounter
System, Shield
The Bastion is wreathed in a crackling energy field visible to all characters. The first time the Bastion is successfully hit by a ranged or melee attack each round, all damage is reduced to **0**, after which the field visibly dissipates until the start of the next round.

Stack Up
Trait
When the Bastion takes its standard move or **Boosts**, an adjacent allied character can choose to move with them, mirroring their movement. This allied character's movement ignores engagement and does not provoke **reactions.** Each allied character can only move a number of spaces this way each round equal to their **Speed.**

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	10	9	8	+4	-3	+0	+3	3	4	5	12	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	12	10	8	+6	-3	+0	+4	4	4	5	14	2

Designer's Notes: The Bastion is a pretty straightforward NPC in a lot of ways, a big guy with a shield that you can take cover behind and who can protect you from damage. There's not really a whole lot about that dynamic that's changed in the rebake version except that I've tried to add a little more juice to a playstyle that largely requires several NPCs to be holding position next to each other in order to

gain these benefits, like adjacent allies being able to reload the Rotary Grenade Launcher, or Stack Up allowing the Bastion a splash of tactical mobility that it's never had before.

Speaking of more closely integrating various optional systems into base systems, you can see this in the Bastion rebake as well, where more of its optional traits now directly hook into Friendly Interdiction.

Perhaps the biggest and most important change is to Deathcounter, what is probably the most recognizable and memorable Bastion ability. Deathcounter is almost certainly responsible for more "that's bullshit!" moments than anything else in the game. Somewhere in the world right now, as you read this, a new player is firing a Cyclone Pulse Rifle at a Bastion, completely unaware that they're about to learn a valuable lesson in why the Scan action is useful.

I actually think that Deathcounter, design-wise, is perfectly fine. It has extremely clear counterplay (though many people do seem to misread how it works, assuming that it only breaks if the Bastion would take damage, instead of simply being hit with an attack), and once you know how it operates you can pretty easily work around it.

So what did I change? I simply added a visibility cue to it. If anything about Deathcounter could be said to be awkward it's the fact that there's absolutely no baked-in telegraphing of it, leaving its effect feeling like it comes completely out of nowhere when it happens. This version of Deathcounter works exactly like the core rulebook version in every way, except that you can now see when it's active (even if you don't yet know how it functions) and when it's been disabled. Sometimes all you need is a bit of tactile feedback to make things click into place.

Also, I'm gonna be real honest...I have no idea why the core rulebook Bastion's Save Target is so low. It doesn't really matter as much because that version of the Bastion has no saves in its kit (the rebake has a whopping one, the new version of the Heavy Assault Shield, whose damage no longer scales so weirdly either), but nowhere else in the game does anyone have a below-ten Save Target, like that's just not a thing that exists. Was it a typo? A weird overlooked artifact? Is there some sinister, secret purpose to it? Whatever the case might be, I raised it to be in line with every other "low Save Target" value across the NPC roster.

Berserker
Striker

Tactics: Berserkers are ferocious melee units that are very scary up close. Their potential is greatest when they can charge into an enemy with **Avalanche Charge** and follow up with another attack with the **Chain Axe.** Though **Stampede Defense** is powerful, due to their terrible **Heat Cap** and **E-Defense**, Berserkers are vulnerable to tech attacks. **Aggression** can be a double-edged sword, making them dangerous both to friend and foe alike, and canny opponents will seek to exploit this.

OPFOR Notes:

- A melee unit with extreme strengths and extreme vulnerabilities, look to quickly get the most out of them before they're destroyed.
- **Aggression** can be used tactically by including it in the area-of-effect for damaging attacks and abilities, though this will of course damage it as well. Enemies can take advantage of this themselves.
- Works well as an aggressive frontline unit to apply immediate pressure to enemies so other units can act unimpeded, or as a sudden and dangerous threat when brought in as reinforcements.

Berserker
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	8	6	6	+3	+2	-2	-1	1	5	5	10	1

Base systems:
Chain Axe
Heavy Melee
+1/2/3
Threat 1
7/9/11 kinetic damage
On Critical Hit: Target becomes **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

Stampede Defense
Trait
The Berserker has **Resistance** to all damage unless they are **Impaired, Stunned, Immobilized, Shredded, Slowed,** or **Exposed.**

Aggression
Trait
After taking damage for the first time each round, the Berserker must immediately attack a random adjacent character, hostile or allied, with the **Chain Axe.** This attack happens even if the Berserker is destroyed**.**

Avalanche Charge
Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Berserker moves spaces equal to their **Speed** in a straight line, ignoring reactions and engagement, then attacks a random adjacent character, hostile or allied, with the **Chain Axe.**

Optional systems:

Juggernaut

Trait

When the Berserker uses **Avalanche Charge**, all characters adjacent to the path they follow or adjacent to their final position, hostile or allied, must succeed on a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone.**

Harpoon Cannon

Main CQB

+2/4/6

AP

Range 5, Threat 3

2/3/4 kinetic damage

On Hit: Targets of smaller or equal **Size** to the Berserker are pulled adjacent to them in a straight line, or as close as possible. If they're larger, the Berserker is pulled adjacent to them instead. If this ends with the Berserker adjacent to the target, the Berserker **Grapples** them.

Retribution

Trait

Whenever the Berserker takes damage, their next attack deals **+1d6 bonus damage.** This bonus damage is lost when the Berserker attacks, or at the end of their next turn.

Headhunter

Trait

Whenever the Berserker attacks a target that is **Grappled, Immobilized, Stunned,** or **Prone** with the Chain Axe, they become **Shredded** on hit rather than on critical hit.

Overdrive Servos

System

The Berserker counts as **Size 3** for **Ram** and **Grapple**, and they deal **3/4/5 kinetic damage** on hit with **Ram** and **Grapple.**

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	9	7	6	+4	+3	-2	-1	1	5	5	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	10	8	6	+5	+4	-2	-1	1	5	5	14	1

Designer's Notes: I love the Berserker. Like the xenomorph, it's the perfect organism...clear-cut strengths and weaknesses, a distinct gameplay style and tactical role, evocative mechanics that players can cleverly engage with, it has it all.

Consequently, the Berserker rebake doesn't really change a whole lot. In terms of base systems, it more

or less works like it always did, with the exception that Aggression now explicitly gets one last swing off even when the Berserker is destroyed, a fun little surprise for players and something else they can try to take advantage of.

The optionals show a bit more change. Retribution has been streamlined from a stacking, scaling bonus into a much more straightforward +1d6 bonus damage, both for simplicity and to help keep things more bounded. Meanwhile, Superhot (yet another ability shared between multiple NPCs) has been replaced in favor of more Berserker-specific options. Overdrive Servos gives the Berserker some additional Blackbeard flavor, and allows the GM to use them to bully incautious players who think their large Heavy Frame mechs make them the king of control points. Headhunter, meanwhile, lets the Berserker get some revenge for all the times you slapped debuffs on it to make it more vulnerable by exploiting some vulnerabilities of its own.

Then we come to optional weapons, of which the core rulebook Berserker has several. I strongly suspect that a lot of the NPCs that have optional weapons in their kit have them mainly to serve as a form of ablative protection against System Trauma...a Berserker without their Chain Axe isn't really much of a threat, after all. I'm not really a fan of them in that regard, and I'm also not really a fan of the way that casually giving an NPC the ability to barrage can significantly increase their damage output without consideration.

Unlike some other optional weapons, both the Harpoon Cannon and Nail Gun actually complement the Berserker's playstyle. The Berserker is a rushdown melee striker, and both guns help with that, either by bringing enemies closer or pinning them in place, but it's for exactly that reason that I don't think the Berserker needs both of them, nor do I think it needs a second weapon that punches as hard as the Nail Gun does. Thus, it gets cut in favor of the lower damage and more utility-oriented Harpoon Cannon, especially as the grapples that weapon can enable now synergize with Overdrive Servos, enabling you to really push the Berserker in the direction of an aggressive grappler if you like.

Bombard
Artillery

Tactics: Bombards are very long-range artillery mechs designed to punish characters that stay close together to take advantage of adjacency bonuses. They are relatively fragile up close, but resilient at a distance thanks to **Siege Armor**, so place them far back to maximize their effectiveness. **Cluster Munitions** adds cumulative damage based on the number of targeted characters within the area, which can include drones and even allies as well.

OPFOR Notes:

- Extremely long-ranged and capable of indirect fire with the **Bombard Cannon** thanks to **Arcing**, but extremely slow and vulnerable at close range.
- Maximizing the number of targets within the **Bombard Cannon's** radius will not only enhance its damage thanks to **Cluster Munitions**, but will automatically reload special shells such as **Earthshaker Shells** for repeat use.
- Works well against enemy compositions that want to remain in close formation, and in conjunction with allies that can either protect it from being rushed down or that can help move enemies closer together for followup attacks.

Bombard
Mech, Artillery

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	7	12	8	+0	-1	+1	+2	0	2	15	11	2

Base systems:
Bombard Cannon
Superheavy Cannon
+2/4/6, +1 Difficulty
Arcing, Ordnance
Range 25, Blast 2
5/7/9 explosive damage

Cluster Munitions
Trait
The Bombard's attacks with the **Bombard Cannon** deal **+2/+3/+4 damage** to all characters for each targeted character beyond the first.

Earthshaker Shells
System
When attacking with the **Bombard Cannon**, the Bombard may also fire a special earthshaker shell. In addition to any damage, one character within the **Blast** must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone.** Debris or broken earth is thrown up by the impact, creating two **Size 1** segments of hard cover in free spaces within **Range 3** of the targeted space. The **Bombard Cannon** must then be reloaded before it can be used again (as though it was **Loading**) unless **two or more characters** were targeted by this attack.

Siege Armor
Trait
The Bombard has **Resistance** to all damage from attacks that originate beyond **Range 3.**

Optional systems:
High-Impact Shells
System
When attacking with the **Bombard Cannon**, the Bombard may fire a special high-impact shell. On hit, characters are knocked back **2 spaces** either directly away from the Bombard or from the center of the Blast, **+1 space** for each targeted character beyond the first, up to a maximum of **5 spaces.** The **Bombard Cannon** must then be reloaded before it can be used again (as though it was **Loading**) unless **two or more characters** were targeted by this attack. Only one type of special shell can be fired at a time.

Bunker Buster Shells
System
When attacking with the **Bombard Cannon**, the Bombard may fire a special bunker buster shell. The Bombard Cannon automatically deals **10/20/30 AP explosive damage** to all objects and terrain in the affected area, and one character in the area must pass a **Hull** save or become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. The **Bombard Cannon** must then be reloaded before it can be used again (as though it was **Loading**) unless **two or more characters** were targeted by this attack. Only one type of special shell can be fired at a time.

Flare Drone
System, Quick Action, Drone
Flare Drone (**Size** 1/2, **HP** 10/15/20, **Evasion** 10, **E-Defense** 10, **Tags: Drone**)

This drone can be deployed to a space within line of sight and **Range 25**, where it hovers in place and begins projecting bright light in a **Burst 2** area. All characters in the affected area – including those that move into the affected area or start their turn within it – lose **Invisible** and **Hidden**, and cannot **Hide** or turn **Invisible** within the area. Additionally, the Bombard gains **+1 Accuracy** to attacks against characters within the affected area (including the drone itself). The Bombard can only have one drone deployed at a time; if a new drone is deployed, the old one disintegrates.

High-Angle Fire
Trait, Full Action, 1/round
The Bombard may prepare a delayed, high-angle shot with the **Bombard Cannon.** Choose a **Blast 3** area, which becomes visible to all characters; the Bombard then makes an attack at the end of the next round with the **Bombard Cannon**, after all characters have acted, against every target within the area.

Counterbattery Suite
System, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: A hostile character makes an attack against the Bombard.
Effect: The triggering character gains **Lock On.** This reaction can't be used against characters within **Range 3** of the Bombard.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	8	14	8	+0	-1	+2	+3	0	2	15	13	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	9	16	8	+0	-1	+3	+4	0	2	15	15	2

Designer's Notes: The Bombard is another NPC with a clearly defined mechanical role, as well as an infamous NPC among players unfamiliar with its particular gimmick. As an artillery NPC, the Bombard serves as an anti-deathball unit, discouraging PCs from clumping together, and at that it excels.

Beyond that, the Bombard doesn't really need to do much else, and so the rebake is more about standardizing how many of its optionals work, consolidating them into a "hit multiple people or have to reload" mechanic, whereas before it was a mix of recharge systems and passive traits.

The possibility of having to reload might make this Bombard seem weaker than its core rulebook counterpart, but I think that in general the Bombard is going to be seeking out multi-target shots anyway. They might want to take a less optimal shot if the PCs spread out smartly in order to apply something like Prone, Knockback, or Shredded to a single target as the situation calls for it, but it's not tremendously difficult to maintain a steady volume of fire with normal attacks (or drop the occasional bit of friendly fire in order to keep those special shells in stock).

This also incentivizes push-and-pull (figuratively and literally) between the PCs and NPCs with forced movement tech...the PCs will naturally want to try and smartly spread out to avoid being shelled and rewarding the Bombard for it, while the Bombard's allies can look for ways to shove the PCs together and get those repeated special shell procs going.

Earthshaker Shells in particular have also been tuned slightly downward, going from a multi-target prone to a single-target prone. While High-Impact Shells and Bunker Buster in the core rulebook are traits and therefore expected to simply be always on (and in fact, I've gone and tweaked those to be a bit juicier than their default), Earthshaker Shells were a Recharge 6+ system, and therefore balanced accordingly.

This version of the system, by contrast, can potentially be used fairly regularly, and I don't think that the mass prone is as healthy when it could theoretically be used to repeatedly prone clusters of slower units and leave them floundering. If anything, you could view this as a bizarre sort of buff to firing Earthshaker Shells into a target zone containing both allies and enemies, knocking a PC prone while leaving any NPCs in the area still standing (if quite scuffed).

In terms of optionals, I've never cared for Cluster-Seeker Bombs...the Bombard already does good damage on its own and doesn't need even more...and Repeater Cannon is one of the more superfluous optional weapons. I understand its intended role is to give the Bombard something to defend itself with if PCs get close to it, but the thing is that I think PCs who get close to Bombards should be rewarded for it, that's like Artillery Unit Weakness 101 right there.

The Bombard is another NPC that's received a size increase. This makes it harder for it to post up behind line-of-sight obscuring terrain and shoot with impunity (though you can still build maps around that tactic if you want, you just need to use bigger rocks). Between having the longest range of any NPC in the rebake roster and Siege Armor, I'm of the opinion that the Bombard doesn't really need that additional layer of overlapping defense as strongly. Its HP value is slightly more frontloaded now to compensate.

Breacher
Striker

Tactics: Breachers pack low accuracy shotguns that can nonetheless deal significant burst damage. They work best against targets with low **Evasion** or when they can gain **Accuracy** by attacking **Prone** targets or those with **Lock On.** They also pose a significant threat to heavily protected targets benefiting from **Armor** and **Resistance** (who often tend to have low **Evasion** as well), as **Break Armor** can strip those defenses away until the effect is cleared.

OPFOR Notes:
- High damage, but low accuracy and short range.
- Relatively slow, but both **Breach Ram** and many of its optional systems provide additional forms of mobility to close the distance quickly.
- Works well against enemies with poor **Evasion** to maximize its chances to hit, and alongside allies that further help enhance its chances of landing successive hits with its **Dual Shotguns.**

Breacher
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	9	7	7	+2	+0	-1	+1	1	3	5	11	2

Base systems:
Dual Shotguns
Main CQB
+1/2/3, +2 Difficulty
Range 3, Threat 3
5/7/9 kinetic damage
This weapon can make two attacks at once, targeting either the same character or different ones. The final attack rolls for this weapon can never be affected by **Accuracy.**

Breach Ram
System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Breacher moves up to **6 spaces** in a straight line, ignoring engagement and passing through – but not stopping in – spaces occupied by other characters. Obstructions and objects in the Breacher's path take **30 AP kinetic damage.** The Breacher passes through any obstructions destroyed this way and continues moving until they have moved **6 spaces** or fail to destroy an obstruction. Any characters in the Breacher's path must succeed on an **Agility** save or be pushed out of the way as directly as possible and knocked **Prone.**

Break Armor
Trait
Characters that are successfully attacked more than once in a turn by the Breacher's **Dual Shotguns** become **Shredded** for the rest of the scene.

Ram Plating
Trait

The Breacher gains **+1 Accuracy** to **Ram.**

Optional systems:
Follower Count
System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
The Breacher makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the Breacher gains **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks against their target, and may **Boost** once per turn as a **free action** so long as it moves them directly towards their target. This lasts until either character is destroyed and cannot be changed to a new target unless the Breacher takes **4 heat** to attempt this tech attack against a different target.

Thermal Charge
System, Grenade, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Breacher may expend a charge to throw a grenade to a space within **Range 5.** Characters in the ensuing **Blast 1** explosion must pass an **Agility** save or take **2/3/4 Burn** and become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. Objects, terrain, and **Deployables** in the area automatically take **30 AP explosive damage**; if any objects or terrain are destroyed this way, the Breacher may immediately move their **Speed** towards one of those spaces or as close as possible.

Painmaker
Trait, Full Action
The Breacher prepares a salvo of shells, becoming **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. This effect is visible to everyone. During the Breacher's next turn, the next time they use the **Dual Shotguns**, they may make four attacks at once instead of two.

Fragmentation Shells
Trait
1/round, when the Breacher makes a successful attack with the **Dual Shotguns**, a different character within **Range 3** of the target takes **2/3/4 kinetic damage** + bonus damage equal to the initial target's **Armor.**

Breach and Clear
Trait
When using **Breach Ram**, the Breacher may also attack any character in their path with the **Dual Shotguns.** The **Dual Shotguns** only make a single attack against each character this way (rather than making two attacks at once), and these attacks deal half damage on hit.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	11	8	7	+3	+0	-1	+2	1	3	5	13	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
22	13	9	7	+4	+0	-1	+3	1	4	5	15	2

Designer's Notes: So here's an interesting guy. The Breacher is maybe one of the more unintuitive Strikers at first glance, a unit that really wants to land multiple attacks with a super inaccurate weapon. It's sometimes hard to tell what this NPC is geared towards at first, which is cracking open low Evasion, high toughness mechs, things like your IPS-N Drakes.

Of course, in practical terms it isn't necessarily hard to crank the Breacher's accuracy up to the point that it's capable of threatening lots of targets with hard-hitting multi-attacks, and multi-attacks are one of the things I set out to curtail with this project. But I think when it comes to the Breacher, its particular implementation of multi-attacking is integral to its gameplay style. Rather than remove and rework it, I decided to keep it intact while reining things in a bit by lowering its weapon damage just a hair, and also ensuring that the Dual Shotguns can't benefit from excess Accuracy, further reinforcing that you want to go after targets with lower Evasion when possible.

It's because of this that the Breacher also got a size increase. Shooting Prone targets is one of the best ways to gain extra Accuracy (as it applies to all attacks, unlike Lock On which is a one-time consumable), but at Size 1 the Breacher struggles to knock larger mechs prone...you can't Ram anyone bigger than you, and Heavy Frame makes things even more difficult. So in addition to being bigger, Ram Plating now encourages the Breacher to knock people flat before unloading both barrels into them.

With the Breacher's bigger size and thus bigger footprint, I've slightly tamped down on its Speed scaling over tier, going from 3/4/5 to 3/3/4, a minor change but one that means you might want to look at pairing it with movement-facilitating options at higher tiers. Its own Thermal Charge system can now be used for this in a pinch as well, given that Breach Ram is on a Recharge 6+ and thus may not always be available. Plus, hey, there's always Boost, not to mention Follower Count can now be used more flexibly if at a heat cost.

One of the biggest changes to its optionals lies in Painmaker, an optional that in the core rulebook version is exceedingly awkward and demanding to make use of. Yeah, it's a lot of extra attacks, but you have to jump through a ton of hoops to get there, and frankly I've never found it to be all that worthwhile. The revised Painmaker along with the newly added Breach and Clear exist to give the Breacher more ways to fish for Break Armor procs. Meanwhile, the rather underwhelming Flechette Shot (which doesn't even have a to-hit value listed, raising the question of how it's even supposed to work) has been replaced with Fragmentation Shells, a way of doling out additional damage that encourages the Breacher to go hunting for heavily armored targets and the allies who like to hide behind them.

And to go along with the size increase from 1 to 2 and Thermal Charge going from a Limited 1 system to a Recharge 6+, the Breacher also has a sideline in terrain destruction. Its terrain damage capabilities have been increased to a flat 30 AP damage at all tiers, primarily so it can blow openings in the terrain big enough to fit its bigger body through...at Tier 1, only dealing 10 damage to terrain might render it incapable of breaching holes in larger obstructions unless the GM is accommodatingly making everything out of Size 1 blocks.

Cataphract
Striker

Tactics: Cataphracts are mobile "linebreaker" strikers that can pull formations apart. **Trample** allows them to move through enemies and get them to the rear lines, where they can use **Impale** to drag vulnerable targets into disadvantageous positions. Position Cataphracts so that they are closer to individual hostile characters, as **Point-Defense Shield** doesn't work if several enemies are an equal distance away. Note that Cataphracts still provoke reactions when they move, so use their abilities carefully.

OPFOR Notes:

- Damage is relatively modest damage for a melee **Striker**, especially against targets with **Armor**, but has a variety of powerful forced movement and **Condition**-applying tools within its optional systems. Consider this when planning its use.
- As a **Size 1** unit, grappling may be less effective against larger targets who can automatically take control of grapples. **Impale** will still drag even larger targets out of position upon use.
- Works well against enemy compositions that rely on grouping closely together, and in conjunction with hazards such as **Mines** or **dangerous terrain** which it can drag targets into.

Cataphract
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	10	8	6	+1	+2	+0	+0	0	8	5	12	1

Base systems:
Ram Cannon
Heavy Cannon, Melee
+0, +1/2/3 Accuracy
Range 5, Threat 2
5/7/9 kinetic damage
This lance can be used as either a ranged or melee weapon, but not both in the same turn. When used as a ranged weapon, **Critical Hits** cause the target to become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn. When used as a melee weapon, it gains **Knockback 2.**

Trample
Trait
The Cataphract ignores engagement and can pass through – but not stop in – spaces occupied by other characters, **1/turn** dealing **2/3/4 kinetic damage** to those characters.

Impale
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
The Cataphract moves up to **8 spaces** in a straight line. Pick a character that the Cataphract passed through or ended adjacent to; they must pass a **Hull** save at **+1 Difficulty.** On a failure, they are **grappled** by the Cataphract and pulled with the Cataphract to the end of their movement. On **Critical Hit** with the **Ram Cannon**, this system automatically **Recharges.**

Point-Defense Shield
System, Shield
The Cataphract has **Resistance** to all damage from the closest hostile character. If multiple characters are equally close, this effect does not apply.

Optional systems:
Electrified Lasso
System, Quick Action, 1/round
A character in line of sight and **Range 5** must make a **Hull** save. On a failure, they are pulled as close as possible to the Cataphract; if they become adjacent, the Cataphract automatically grapples them.

Lance Shot
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
The Cataphract fires a piercing lance in a **Line 5** path. All characters within the affected area must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked back **3 spaces.** Any character that collides with an obstruction or another character also becomes **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn.

Electromagnetic Bola
System, Recharge 5+, Quick Action
A flying character in **Range 10** must pass an Agility save. On a failure, they are pulled **3 spaces**, land immediately, and become **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn. This counts as falling but without damage.

Charge
Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Cataphract moves spaces equal to their **Speed** in a straight line, ignoring **reactions** and engagement, then attacks a target within **Range** with the **Ram Cannon.**

Capacitor Discharge
Trait
As long as the Cataphract isn't **Slowed** or **Jammed**, whenever characters within **Range 3** make ranged or melee attacks against them, they take **2 heat** before rolling.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	11	9	7	+2	+3	+0	+0	0	8	5	14	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	12	10	8	+3	+4	+0	+0	0	8	5	16	1

Designer's Notes: When looking at the Cataphract in the core rulebook, my first thought is: what's up with that to-hit bonus? Why does it scale like that, gaining Accuracy by tier? It's so weird! No other NPC does that. I debated whether I should keep it like that or not, and ultimately decided to try and find a reason to stick with it just to see if I could.

When you have a lot of Accuracy, that lends itself to well to fishing for critical hits, and so I gave the Ram Cannon both an on crit effect as well as having critical hits automatically recharge Impale, the Cataphract's big "this is what I was put in the OPFOR to do" ability. This is something you'll see elsewhere throughout, which is giving Recharge abilities alternate ways to be recharged than just rolling the dice and hoping. There's still an element of random variance to it, maybe you just won't score any crits either, but it gives the GM a goal they can actively pursue, and it also gives players something they can work to interfere with when they figure out how it works.

The Cataphract also isn't the first time that we'll see something which I like to call "why does this NPC have this incredibly powerful optional ability that's all about hitting lots of people with hard crowd-control debuffs out of nowhere?" Lance Shot, the core rulebook version, is undeniably good as in "strong," but why does the Cataphract have an AoE jam? Yes, it's a bit of a hybrid striker/controller, but "jams a bunch of people at once" isn't really something I would associate with the fast charging lance guy who yanks people across the map.

For the rebake, I leaned into the displacement angle more, giving the Cataphract more forced movement tools instead. Capacitor Discharge was changed among other reasons because I don't really think NPCs need multiple Resistance-granting capabilities going on at once. Point-Defense Shield is already in the Cataphract's base kit, and it's a very good implementation of Resistance with specific encouraged tactics and counterplay (the Cataphract likes dragging people off to 1v1 them, where it has an advantage, and this can be played around). Meanwhile, Capacitor Discharge going "yeah it also just gets energy and heat resistance too, why not" feels like gilding the lily. So now it's less about that, and more of a thing that makes fighting the Cataphract up close and personal (where it likes to be) more dangerous.

As for why Capacitor Discharge now shuts off via Jammed rather than Immobilized, I made this change specifically because the Cataphract has several abilities that incline it towards grappling, and grappling is a good way to inadvertently end up becoming Immobilized (such as grabbing onto a bigger character, say) which means an ability that shuts off for that reason runs afoul of potential anti-synergy. This exists within the core rulebook version and while I'm not sure how big of a deal it is in practical terms, it's always struck me as a little unusual that you can take an optional which can be shut off accidentally by doing things other abilities want you to do (as opposed to a more deliberate tradeoff, which I don't really view this as being).

Demolisher
Defender

Tactics: Demolishers are slow, resilient defenders that dish out heavy damage and debilitating conditions when enemies get close to them. Use their size and power in melee combat to force enemy characters away from areas of the map until they can bring the Demolisher down, using **Earthshatter** to attack them from a distance.

OPFOR Notes:

- Slow and unable to be involuntarily moved easily, better at holding critical areas of the map (such as objective points) than at chasing down speedy targets.
- When targets aren't in range for melee attacks or close-range systems, consider actions such as **Lock On** or **Stabilize,** or use **Earthshatter** to target empty spaces and create cover for its allies to use.
- Works well alongside allies that can either move enemies into range**,** or that can move it closer to enemies (typically via **teleportation** as **Heavy Frame** doesn't prevent that).

Demolisher
Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	6	7	8	+3	-2	-1	+2	2	2	10	10	2

Base systems:
Demolition Hammer
Superheavy Melee
+1/2/3, +1 Difficulty
AP, Knockback 3
Threat 2
12/14/16 explosive damage
On Hit: Targets must pass a **Hull** save or be **Stunned** until the end of their next turn.

Earthshatter
Heavy Melee
+1/2/3
Knockback 1, Thrown 5
Threat 1
5/6/7 kinetic damage
On Attack: The Demolisher deals **10/20/30 AP kinetic damage** to an object or piece of terrain within **Range 2**, if there is one. Hit or miss, place a **Size 1** piece of terrain that grants **hard cover** in a free space adjacent to your target. The terrain has **10 HP** and **Evasion 5.** This weapon does not need to be retrieved between uses.

Shock Armor
Trait
The Demolisher has **Resistance to damage from melee weapons.**

Heavy Frame
Trait
The Demolisher can't be pushed, pulled, knocked **Prone**, or knocked back by smaller characters.

Optional systems:
Jet Propulsion
System
Whenever the Demolisher makes an attack with the **Demolition Hammer**, it may take **4 heat** to move **4 spaces** in a straight line directly towards the target before the attack.

Kinetic Compensation
Trait
Each time the Demolisher misses with the **Demolition Hammer**, they gain **+1 Accuracy** on all subsequent attacks with it until they hit. This **Accuracy** can be gained multiple times and stacks.

Seismic Destroyer
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
Unless they can fly, all characters in a **Cone 5** area pass an **Agility** save or be knocked **Prone.** All objects and terrain within this area takes **10/20/30 AP kinetic damage**; if any terrain or objects are destroyed this way, all affected characters also automatically take **4/6/8 kinetic damage.**

Hullcracker
Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Demolisher chooses a character within **Range 2**; they must pass a **Hull** save or be **Immobilized** and **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

Drag Cables
System, Quick Action
The Demolisher chooses a character within **Range 5**; that character must pass a **Hull** save or become embedded with high-tensile cable anchors. While these anchors are embedded, neither the target nor the Demolisher can move more than **5 spaces** away from one another. If the target is smaller than the Demolisher, they move when the Demolisher moves, mirroring their movements. The Demolisher can attempt to reel in the cables as a **protocol**, forcing an embedded character to pass another **Hull** save or be pulled adjacent to the Demolisher (or as close as possible).

An embedded character or an adjacent ally can remove the cables on a hit with a **melee attack** against **Evasion 10.** Otherwise, this effect lasts until the end of the scene, until either character is destroyed, or until the Demolisher uses this system on a new target.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
25	7	8	8	+4	-2	-1	+3	2	2	10	13	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
30	8	9	8	+5	-2	-1	+4	2	2	10	15	2

Designer's Notes: The Demolisher is too damn slow. This is the experience just about everyone has with it the first time they try to use it, visions of walking up to a PC mech and smashing it with a big hammer dancing in their heads, before the cold, hard reality of 2 Speed sets in. Pairing Demolishers with a Mirage to teleport them around the map is a classic combo for a reason.

But do I think the Demolisher needs more speed? No, and furthermore I think the Demolisher being slow should be integral to its tactical identity. The Demolisher isn't a speedy striker running people down, it's the guy in heavy armor standing outside the castle gates telling you that none shall pass. Being slow should inform the GM of how the Demolisher is meant to be used, as a dangerous guardian warding off places the PCs might want to visit, like objective points.

But being both slow *and* a melee unit does present some difficulties when it comes to having the Demolisher play an active role in a fight. It can be very easy for players to simply ignore it and focus on other matters, leaving it little opportunity to be a contributing member of the OPFOR. For that reason, rather than making it faster, I elected to give the Demolisher more stuff to do at a distance. Earthshatter lets it golf club chunks of terrain at people it can't reach with the hammer, extending its potential danger radius, along with Seismic Destroyer and Drag Cables. The core rulebook Demolisher does have access to the frankly absurd Concussion Missiles optional, which in my opinion is something that's weirdly a bit *too* good at what it does, hence why it's no longer present here.

But in the interests of giving GMs what their dark hearts thirst for, Jet Propulsion does enable some additional movement the Demolisher can tap into in exchange for a heat tax. I added this for two main reasons, the first being to give the Demolisher a bit more independence outside of things like pairing it with a Mirage, and the second being that in the revised Veteran template that you'll see later in this supplement, the Acrobat trait which could be used to give slow units like the Demolisher plenty of free additional movement no longer exists.

While it's getting ahead of myself a bit, I'm not really a big fan of the Acrobat trait. It flattens the identity of slow NPCs by being a no-cost, no-friction way to give them an abundance of extra mobility, and you commonly see it used on slow units like the Demolisher. Jet Propulsion is my attempt at giving Demolisher-using GMs something that still enables extra movement, but comes with more of a cost associated with it than just "3 extra movement every time you move or boost."

To go back to the Demolisher itself, Dig In was removed in favor of an HP increase at all tiers. As mentioned, I'm not really a big fan of NPCs having multiple forms of Resistance all at once, and Shock Armor is a more interesting defensive layer than "like the Assault's Hunker Down but it makes you slow." And speaking of the Assault, I think that the Assault facing a consequence like becoming Slowed in exchange for Resistance suits them better than a unit that's already probably not moving much.

Oh, and here's yet another example of Sap being turned into something more specific to the NPC in question. The Demolisher already has access to Stunned with its hammer, so there's no reason to give it even more Stunned in its optionals, so Hullcracker is instead all about pounding someone into the ground like a nail and leaving them vulnerable to a followup swing if they aren't careful.

Engineer
Striker

Tactics: Engineers' **Deployable Turrets** make them potent force multipliers, as they can continue to deploy new ones each turn. If enemies don't deal with an Engineer's turrets, their potential damage and battlefield utility quickly skyrockets. **Target Designator** can be used to focus fire upon selected foes, as otherwise turrets attack the nearest target, which players can use to control who takes damage.

OPFOR Notes:

- Slow but tough, damage output scales over time with the number of **Deployable Turrets** on the field, though turrets are easy to destroy.
- Though not a full-fledged **Support** unit, various optional systems enable a more support-oriented playstyle. High **Sensors** along with **Target Designator** enables support via **Lock On** as well.
- Works well in combat scenarios where it has time to build up turrets in defensive positions or around critical objectives, forcing enemies to move into range of multiple turrets at once.

Engineer
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	7	10	10	-1	-1	+1	+3	0	3	15	10	1

Base systems:
Flak Cannon
Heavy Cannon
+1/2/3
Smart
Range 15
3/4/5 explosive damage
This weapon gains **+1 Accuracy** against **flying** targets.

Deployable Turret
System, Drone, Quick Action
Deployable Turret (**Size** 1/2, **HP** 1, **Evasion** 10, **E-Defense** 10, **Tags: Drone**)

Up to two of these self-constructing turrets can be deployed to any free space within **Range 3.** At the end of the Engineer's turn, deployed turrets attack the nearest hostile character within **Range 10.** They attack at **+1/2/3** and deal **4/5/6 kinetic damage.** The Engineer may have six turrets deployed at one time; if they deploy additional turrets beyond this, previous turrets of their choice are destroyed until they have no more than six total. All turrets are destroyed when the Engineer is destroyed. If the Engineer becomes **Jammed** or **Stunned**, their turrets are also disabled for the duration of those conditions instead of attacking.

Target Designator
System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Engineer chooses a character within line of sight and **Sensors**; they gain **Lock On.** At the end of

the Engineer's turn, up to two of their **Deployable Turrets** will attack that target (if it is within **Range**) instead of attacking the nearest hostile character. This trait automatically **recharges** whenever two or more **Deployable Turrets** are destroyed by hostile characters before the start of the Engineer's next turn.

Optional systems:
Deployable Fortifications
Trait
Deployable Turrets are **Size 1**, and adjacent allied characters can use them for **hard cover.**

Perimeter Defense
Trait
Deployable Turrets gain **Threat 3** and can **Overwatch** (1/round per turret), and the Engineer gains the **Auto-Tracking** reaction.

Auto-Tracking
Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: An allied character within **Range 3** of a **Deployable Turret** makes a successful attack.
Effect: The **Deployable Turret** makes an attack against the triggering character's target, as long as the target is within line of sight and **Range.**

Mobile Turrets
Trait
At the start of the Engineer's turn, they may move two **Deployable Turrets** up to **3 spaces** in any direction.

Skyshield Protocol
Trait
Deployable Turrets gain **+1 Accuracy** against **flying** targets.

Repurpose
Trait, Quick Action, 1/round
The Engineer chooses an allied character adjacent to one of their **Deployable Turrets**; that character either gains **3/4/5 Overshield** or gains **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks, checks, and saves until the end of their next turn. The turret is then destroyed.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
22	8	12	10	-1	-1	+2	+4	0	3	15	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
24	9	14	10	-1	-1	+3	+5	0	3	15	14	1

Designer's Notes: The Engineer's turrets are, quite naturally, the most distinctive thing about it, and yet

the players are fairly disincentivized from interacting with them. Not due to any overt punishment mechanic, but simply because it's incredibly inefficient to try and shoot the turrets when they have as much HP as they do and the Engineer can just spawn them infinitely. Anyone remotely familiar with enemy-spawners in any other games will be able to tell you that the optimal strategy is usually to kill whatever is spawning the adds first. This means that fighting an Engineer is almost always just a case of damage-racing it down while ignoring its turrets, only destroying them if you happen to do so incidentally via AoEs or something.

So this rebake is a bit of a radical departure in the sense that it makes turrets supremely interactive, namely by giving them a whopping 1 HP each.

This means that turrets can be much more easily destroyed, and this could perhaps be considered a big step down for the Engineer, but any time spent destroying turrets is still time not destroying other stuff. What this means is that AoE weapons, things like grenades, and paired auxiliary weapons are now more viable as means of engaging Engineers as opposed to simply "shoot the big guy until they're dead," and to make up for this steep decline in turret survivability, Engineers can now deploy two turrets at a time, eliminating the need for the Power Deployer optional which, given how it turns placing turrets into a Recharge mechanic and how random recharging can be, I've always considered something of a potential trap choice.

Turrets being more easily destroyable also means that bringing multiple Engineers into a fight will, hopefully, be less of a potentially oppressive experience, but I'd maybe still keep an eye on it. Multiplicative scaling is a pain like that.

With all of this in mind, the Engineer and its optionals have been reworked to give it more stuff to do besides pop out turrets endlessly. Engineer's Mark is now Target Designator, still allowing it to focus some of its turrets onto a target of its choice, but also applying Lock On to someone in the process, great for sharing with friends. Meanwhile, its optionals have been changed to give the turrets more of a support/utility bent along with dealing damage, letting allies use them for cover or turning them into power-ups.

Maybe the biggest visible change in its optionals is the removal of the Arsenal trait. There's a lot to recommend the fantasy of customizing one's turrets, but I've never felt that Arsenal was really all that compelling in practice. I rarely find myself wanting to turn a Range 10 attack into a Cone 3, for example, and the long range blast option is awkward to take advantage of with the turrets' inherent targeting restrictions (since you can't intelligently place the AoEs as you'd like). That leaves Reliable damage (ehh) and the Primed option which turns turrets into bombs...an option that's very feast or famine, considering most players probably won't be blowing up turrets anyway, and if they do it won't be close enough to matter. About the best you could hope for is to use Mobile Turrets to move them into someone's face and hope they blow up in time, presumably if and/or when the Engineer itself is destroyed.

Also, Arsenal is just a lot to keep track of, and its removal helpfully means there's one less thing for GMs running Engineers to have to concern themselves with. They've already got enough on their plates as it is.

Goliath
Defender

Tactics: Goliaths are relatively mobile defenders (for their size, that is) that can bring enemies to them. With **Crush Targeting**, Goliaths force dangerous enemies to focus attacks on them; all it needs is line of sight, allowing Goliaths to target even fast or hard-to-hit characters. The prodigious size of Goliaths also lets them provide cover for their allies and obstruct the battlefield with their presence.

OPFOR Notes:

- Extremely high **HP** and large **Size**, be mindful of deploying more than one in a given combat.
- Use abilities such as **Crush Targeting** and **Mag Gauntlet** to identify dangerous enemies and force their attention elsewhere, taking damage for allies through coercion and looming threats.
- Works well in combat scenarios where it can maneuver unimpeded, and in conjunction with fragile allies that benefit from an aggressive bodyguard that dominates enemy attention.

Goliath
Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
25	6	8	8	+4	-2	+1	+1	0	3	10	11	3

Base systems:
Drum Shotgun
Heavy CQB
+2/4/6
Range 5, Threat 3
5/6/7 kinetic damage
This weapon ignores ranged penalties from **Engaged.**

Crush Targeting
System, Quick Tech
A hostile character within **Sensors** and line of sight gains **+3 Difficulty** to attack against any character other than the Goliath until the start of the Goliath's next turn. This effect does not stack, and the effect ends immediately if the Goliath becomes **Jammed** or **Stunned.**

Towering Stride
Trait
The Goliath can end its turn overlapping obstructions, cover, and terrain smaller than **Size 3.**

Heavy Frame
Trait
The Goliath can't be pushed, pulled, knocked **Prone**, or knocked back by smaller characters.

Guardian
Trait
Adjacent allied characters can use the Goliath for **hard cover.**

Optional systems:

Power Knuckle

System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

A character within **Range 2** must pass a **Hull** save or take **4/5/6 kinetic damage**, be pushed **5 spaces** directly away from the Goliath, and knocked **Prone.**

Pin

Trait, Quick Action

A character within **Range 2** becomes **Immobilized** and **Impaired** until they either damage the Goliath, the Goliath is **Stunned** or destroyed, or the Goliath targets another character with this effect. The Goliath is **Immobilized** for the duration of this effect.

Mag Gauntlet

System, Quick Tech

A character within **Sensors** and line of sight must pass a **Hull** save or be pulled **3 spaces** towards the Goliath. If they are pulled adjacent to the Goliath (or are already adjacent to them), they automatically become grappled. The Goliath can only grapple one character this way at a time, and can't use this system while grappling someone this way.

Coercive Force

System, Full Tech, Recharge 6+

All characters of the Goliath's choice within **Sensors** are pulled **2 spaces** towards the Goliath.

Attractor Field

Reaction, Trait, Recharge 5+

Trigger: An allied character within **Range 2** and line of sight is targeted by an attack dealing **kinetic** or **explosive** damage.

Effect: The Goliath becomes the target of the attack instead. If the attack was an area of effect, such as a **Line, Cone, Blast,** etc, the attacker must now position it so it targets the Goliath, or as close as possible, which could change its targets. This transfer takes place even if the attack could not have hit the Goliath (i.e. it was a melee attack).

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
30	7	9	10	+5	-2	+2	+1	0	3	10	13	3

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
35	8	10	12	+6	-2	+3	+1	0	3	10	15	3

Designer's Notes: A number of NPCs are defined not as much by what they do as by what they *are.* In the Goliath's case, that's being The Big Guy. The biggest NPC you can have outside of putting the Ship template on someone, the Goliath serves as a defender by virtue of A). being big, and thus providing a lot of Guardian bulk to hide behind, B). being big, and thus having lots of HP, and C). Crush Targeting, which makes it so people have a hard time hitting anyone who isn't the Goliath, with all of its HP to

absorb that punishment.

The Goliath faces some difficulties though, firstly because Crush Targeting is on a recharge roll, and secondly (and more uniquely), the Goliath is *so* big that it has trouble sometimes maneuvering around maps, even with a base Speed of 3 which is "slow but not, like, Demolisher slow."

For the rebake, Crush Targeting no longer has a recharge, but you can disable it with certain debuffs, and Siege Armor is replaced by a new trait, Towering Stride, that allows the Goliath to move with a bit more freedom around terrain-filled maps.

The flavor text in the core rulebook mentions in passing that Goliaths, or at least the specific version being described, makes use of "magtech" and that gave me an idea for where to take things with an eye towards turning the Goliath into even more of a demanding, forceful bruiser-style tank. Power Knuckle and Pin remain, both solid and good optionals, but while I get the intent, Retribution belongs to the Berserker so out it goes, along with Watchful Guardian.

Crushing Embrace is a pretty solid trait, but Mag Gauntlet trades out Jammed for the ability to yank someone into the Goliath's grasp, while Coercive Force gives the big bully even more tools to shove people around (including allies, if you want to feel clever about yourself). The additional defensive capabilities provided by Watchful Guardian are replaced instead by Attractor Field, which allows the Goliath to divert attacks into itself, directly leveraging its massive HP pool for more active protection.

As a side note, a number of the rebake Goliath's systems are now tech systems, including Crush Targeting. This matters a bit in terms of what can and can't be used while it's Jammed, and also makes the Hacker talent's Invade option Hack./Slash more useful for players to take advantage of.

Hive
Controller

Tactics: Hives use **Razor Swarm** to control the battlefield, granting soft cover to their allies and denying areas to their enemies. Deploy your swarm and use **Drone Barrage** to lock down enemies, or move them into the range of swarms and allies.

OPFOR Notes:
- Physically resilient with well-rounded stats, a good inclusion in many forces.
- Proper positioning of **Razor Swarm** and other optional systems is key to effectively denying areas and disrupting enemy formations.
- Works well in combat scenarios where contesting and denying objective zones is key, as well as with allies that can either benefit from the cover **Razor Swarm** provides or that can take advantage of enemies being forcibly moved.

Hive
Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	8	10	8	-1	+0	+2	+1	0	4	10	12	1

Base systems:
Hunter-Killer Nexus
Main Nexus
+2/4/6
Seeking, Smart
Range 10
3/4/5 burn

Razor Swarm
System, Drone, Quick Action
The Hive deploys a **Blast 1** razor swarm in a free area within **Sensors.** Allied characters gain **soft cover** as long as they are at least partially within the affected area. Hostile characters that start their turn at least partially within the area or move into it for the first time in a round take **2/3/4 burn.** At the start of the Hive's turn, they may move the razor swarm up to **2 spaces** in any direction, including into spaces occupied by other characters. Only a single razor swarm may be deployed at a time, and if a new one is deployed (or the Hive is destroyed) the old one is destroyed.

Drone Barrage
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6
The Hive makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target chooses one: they become **Immobilized** and **Impaired** until the end of their next turn, or they immediately move up to **4 spaces** in a direction chosen by the Hive. This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke **reactions.**

Optional systems:
Driving Swarm

Trait
Whenever characters take **burn** from a razor swarm, they must pass a **Systems** save or immediately move **4 spaces** in a direction chosen by the Hive after taking damage. This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke **reactions.**

Harrier Maniple
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6
The Hive releases a swarm of tiny drones and makes a tech attack against a hostile character within **Sensors.** On a success, the Hive pushes the target up to **2 spaces** in a direction of their choice and the drones create a swarming **Burst 2** area centered around them that lasts until the end of their next turn. All other hostile characters that start their turn at least partially within the area or move into it for the first time in a round take **2/3/4 burn.** This counts as taking **burn** from a razor swarm.

Solipsis Swarm
System
At the start of their turn, hostile characters within **Range 3** of the Hive take **2/3/4 burn.** This counts as taking **burn** from a razor swarm.

Electro-Nanite Payloads
Trait
Until the end of their next turn, any character that takes **burn** from the Hive or a razor swarm makes all checks and saves at **+1 Difficulty**, and all tech attacks are made against them with **+1 Accuracy.** This effect of this trait does not stack.

Command Override
Quick Tech, Heat 4 (Self), Recharge 5+
The Hive chooses up to three **Drones** within **Sensors** (including those belonging to other characters) and moves them **3 spaces** in any direction. Then all characters adjacent to any of those **Drones** must pass a **Systems** save or take **2/3/4 burn** and gain **Lock On.** This counts as taking **burn** from a razor swarm.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
22	9	12	8	-1	+0	+3	+2	0	4	10	14	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
24	10	14	8	-1	+0	+4	+3	0	4	10	16	1

Designer's Notes: The Hive is an OPFOR staple. For *Lancer* GMs looking to flesh out an enemy composition, no other NPC is as endlessly versatile. It does control, it does damage, it's tough, it works at a variety of ranges, and there really isn't a bad way to build one. It's like onions and garlic, it's hard to go wrong by adding some to whatever you're cooking.

So if the Hive is so good, is there anything about it to rebake?

Beyond removing its completely unnecessary multi-attack scaling, the Hive is yet another example of an NPC with a quintessential base ability that's on a recharge. It does make a bit more sense given that Razor Swarms create a permanent presence on the battlefield, but as I did with the Barricade, I think it makes more sense to remove recharge and instead limit the Hive to a singular swarm. Now you might think this drastically reduces the amount of map pressure the Hive can apply, but we'll get to that.

To make up for being limited to a single Razor Swarm, the benefits of Motile Swarm are baked in for free, letting the Hive either nudge the swarm around as a protocol or use quick actions to reposition it where it can do the most harm.

Now we come to the optionals, and this is where things get fun. This version of the Hive is all about giving GMs additional tools to create additional dangerous areas on the map through various means. Rather than plopping down additional Razor Swarms, you yourself can manifest a swarm around the Hive, or cause enemies to become surrounded by them via Harrier Maniple, or cause them to emerge from drones on the field (allied or hostile alike) through Command Override (and really, how weird is it that the Drone Swarm NPC didn't have any way to interact with drones before?).

Furthermore, taking burn from anything that counts as a Razor Swarm is capable of proccing the Driving Swarm trait, while taking burn from the Hive in general (including its Hunter-Killer Nexus) can inflict Electro-Nanite Payloads onto targets, setting them up for future tech attacks either from the Hive or its allies.

With only one Razor Swarm to worry about, this does mean the Hive has to be more thoughtful about its positioning, but in turn it has more time to spend harassing the PCs with the new tools at its disposal, and it should also make things easier for GMs who no longer have to worry about Razor Swarms covering every inch of the map, especially if you're using multiple Hives in one fight.

In terms of stat adjustments, it's always been kind of surprising (and a bit excessive) to me that the Hive, already such a generally well-rounded, effective, and durable controller, also has a high base speed. I don't really think it needs that on top of everything else, but as a compromise (and to put things into parity to cut down on a bit of mental overhead) I increased the range on its Hunter-Killer Nexus from 8 to 10, in line with its Sensors.

A note on Grind Maniple: this is a really solid tech attack that I find falls into the category of "generally good, but doesn't really have much to say about how the NPC plays." Don't worry though, as while it's no longer a part of the Hive rebake's kit, it's too good to just throw out completely, and it'll be making another appearance later in this supplement.

Hornet
Controller

Tactics: Hornets are small, fast controllers that are extremely hard to hit and incredibly annoying. They deal limited damage, but their ability to inflict debilitating conditions and **Impair** numerous targets is great for interfering with enemy strikers. Fortunately for their enemies, Hornets have a low **E-Defense** that makes them vulnerable to smart weaponry, **Reliable** damage, and tech attacks.

OPFOR Notes:

- Extremely mobile and evasive, but also extremely fragile and close-ranged.
- **Hover flight** and several mobility-enhancing optional systems enable freely selecting targets for harassment, and multiple types of conditions (including access to **Jammed** and **Immobilized** along with **Impaired**) allows for maximum disruption against a variety of foes.
- Works well against targets relying heavily on powerful all-or-nothing attacks, and in combat engagements where its mobility and harassment capabilities can contest objectives all across the map.

Hornet
Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	16	6	5	-2	+2	+2	+0	0	6	5	12	1/2

Base systems:
Stinger Pistol
Auxiliary CQB
+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
Range 5, Threat 3
1/2/3 energy damage
On Hit: Targets become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

SSC Total Suite
System
The Hornet can **hover** whenever they move.

Weave
Trait
Each round, the first attack made against the Hornet as a **reaction** automatically fails.

Impale Systems
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 5+
The Hornet makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, they take **3/4/5 heat** and become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn.

Optional systems:
Supersonic
Trait, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The Hornet flies to a space in line of sight and **Range 50** so impossibly fast that it counts as **teleportation.** If they end this movement within **Range 5** of another character, that character becomes **Impaired** until the end of their next turn and this ability automatically **recharges;** if multiple characters are within **Range 5**, the Hornet chooses only one of them to become **Impaired.**

Umbral Interdiction
System, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: A character within **Sensors** and line of sight attempts an attack.
Effect: If the target is not **Impaired**, they immediately become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn; this interrupts and resolves before the triggering attack. If the target is **Impaired**, they must pass a **Systems** check or their attack automatically misses.

System Spike
Trait
Hostile **Impaired** characters within the Hornet's **Sensors** receive **+2 Difficulty** on all attacks, saves, and skill checks instead of **+1 Difficulty.**

Slingshot
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 5+
The Hornet makes a tech attack against a character in **Sensors.** On a success, they take **3/4/5 heat** and are pushed **3 spaces** in a direction of the Hornet's choice, then the Hornet moves to any free space within **Range 5** of the target as directly as possible.

Lock/Hold Javelins
System, Full Action
The Hornet fires a javelin at a character within **Range 5** and line of sight. The target must succeed on a **Hull** save or be impaled, at which point the javelin tethers itself and its victim to the ground (or another surface), rendering them **Immobilized** and **Shredded.** They, or any adjacent character, can attempt to remove the javelin with a successful **Hull** save as a **full action**; otherwise, this effect lasts for the rest of the scene or until the Hornet takes this action again.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	18	7	6	-2	+4	+3	+0	0	8	5	14	1/2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	20	8	7	-2	+6	+4	+0	0	10	5	16	1/2

Designer's Notes: Another NPC largely defined by what it is rather than what it does, the Hornet is defined by being annoying.

Okay, the Hornet is *actually* defined by being absurdly evasive and hard to hit, encouraging players to find other ways of engaging with it, like Reliable damage or hacking. That's cool and all, but what does the Hornet *do* then? Well, it Jams people with Impale Systems and...Impairs them with the Stinger

Pistol. And maybe does other debuff stuff. Or teleports. It makes attacks miss sometimes.

It's not really a very strong gameplay identity. "Controller that debuffs people and makes things hard for them" is like Controller 101 stuff, that's what the role *does.* What does the Hornet do specifically, in terms of function, to set it apart from something like the Witch?

In the core rulebook, I find that's a bit hard to define. I do think it's kind of interesting and unique that the Hornet has a gun that zaps people with Impaired on a hit, and so I decided to lean into that some more throughout...what if the Hornet took the status effect that the game generally weighs as "annoying but not super powerful" and made it even *more* annoying? What if it Impaired even more people? What if it made Impaired even stronger?

The Hornet is also a bit unique by virtue of being a fragile controller that doesn't want to hide in the backlines, and in fact *can't* or else it can't do anything, due to its incredibly short Sensors. I brought the Stinger Pistol's range into parity with its Sensors (a thing I do with other NPCs throughout, mainly as an ease of overhead thing) to emphasize that even more; the Hornet is the controller that lives in your face, daring you to try and swat it down.

Things like Supersonic and the newly added Slingshot play into this even further, emphasizing the Hornet's mobility while encouraging that short-range lifestyle. This also makes it an incredibly responsive NPC when it comes to sitreps with multiple objectives that need contesting...Slingshot can be used to yank someone off a point before moving into the newly-vacated spot, for example, something I'm sure the PCs will greatly appreciate.

Umbral Interdiction now works on a bit of a two-step system, requiring the target to be Impaired in advance if you want to skip straight ahead to forcing their attack to miss, but maybe the Impaired it doles out otherwise will still be enough to do the job, especially if paired with System Spike which doubles the effectiveness of Impaired within its Sensor 5 radius.

As for Lock/Hold Javelins, they can stay as-is, everybody loves nailing someone to the ground. Plus, all that Impaired flying around will make the saves to try and get free that much harder.

A note on the Impaired condition: this is one of the only conditions in the game that players have a readily available form of Immunity to via the Superior By Design core bonus. This core bonus means that several of the Hornet rebake's tools, namely Umbral Interdiction and System Spike, will be completely unable to affect characters benefiting from it. I don't think this is enough to to constitute a significant problem, as there's still plenty the Hornet can bring to the table that Superior By Design won't protect them from (Impale Systems, Slingshot, Lock/Hold Javelins, and even if they're Impaired-immune, Supersonic can still use them as a valid destination for free recharges), but you may want to keep it in mind when designing an OPFOR including a Hornet against such PC builds.

Mirage
Support

Tactics: Mirages are potent support mechs, able to teleport their allies around at will and hinder ranged attackers with abilities like **Warp Sensors.** They can also make allied characters **Invisible** with **Dataveil**, but become vulnerable themselves while doing so. These strengths come at a price: attacks that ignore cover (such as **Seeking** attacks, melee, or tech attacks) bypass many of these defenses, and Mirages are incapable of dealing damage on their own.

OPFOR Notes:

- Able to easily reposition allies all around the battlefield, but vulnerable to attacks that ignore cover as well as **Reliable** damage.
- **Teleportation** ignores obstructions, engagement, and doesn't provoke **reactions.** Make use of this to move allies out of danger or into positions they'd otherwise be unable to reach normally.
- Works well in combat scenarios where their movement-granting capabilities can be used to readily contest multiple objectives, and alongside allies whose slow speed can be offset by **teleportation.**

Mirage
Mech, Support

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	10	12	6	-2	+1	+2	+1	0	5	15	12	1/2

Base systems:
Warp Sensors
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6
The Mirage makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, they take **2/3/4 heat** and all attacks they make until the end of their next turn treat their targets as having **soft cover.**

Dataveil
System
By default, the Mirage is **Invisible.** They can transfer this status to another character within line of sight as a quick action. When they do so, the Mirage ceases to be **Invisible**, and as a **quick action** they may transfer it back to themselves or to another character; otherwise, this effect lasts until the Mirage is destroyed.

Glitch Scanners
System, Quick Tech
The Mirage's advanced electronic countermeasures play havoc with enemy systems, causing them to register false positives on the battlefield. They may **teleport** up to two allied characters within **Sensors**, moving them **5 spaces** in any direction – revealing their "true" locations.

Blip
Trait, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: A hostile character takes action in line of sight.
Effect: The Mirage may **teleport** one allied character within **Sensors 5 spaces** in any direction.

Optional systems:

Illusory Subroutines

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6

The Mirage makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target treats all characters allied to the Mirage as **Invisible** until the start of the Mirage's next turn.

Warp Targeting

Trait

All allied characters within **Sensors** benefit from special **digital soft cover**; this stacks with other sources of **soft cover**, giving **+2 Difficulty** on ranged attacks against characters benefiting from both instead of **+1** (**digital soft cover** does not stack). If the Mirage takes damage, this effect ends until the start of their next turn.

Metafold Shove

System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3

The Mirage makes a tech attack against a hostile character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target swaps places with an allied character within the Mirage's line of sight and within **Range 5** of the target, both characters **teleporting.** Flying characters can't be swapped with characters that aren't flying, and vice versa.

Manifest False Idols

System, Full Tech, Recharge 5+

The Mirage creates three **Size 1** data constructs in free spaces within line of sight and **Range 5.** These constructs provide **soft cover**, but don't block line of sight and can be passed through. When hostile characters pass through a construct, it disappears and they must pass a **Systems** save or take **2/3/4 heat** and become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn. During the Mirage's turn, they can **teleport** an allied character within line of sight to the location of a data construct as a **quick action**, causing the construct to disappear, as long as there is sufficient free space for them to end this movement in. These constructs last until the end of the scene, until the Mirage is destroyed, or until the Mirage uses this system again.

Multiplicity

Reaction, Trait, 1/round

Trigger: A allied character in line of sight and **Sensors** is hit by an attack.

Effect: The attacker must pass a **Systems** save, or the target gains **Resistance** to all damage from the attack. On a success, the attack does damage as normal, but the Mirage may then **teleport** the target up to **5 spaces** in any direction and that character gains **soft cover** until the end of their next turn.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	12	15	6	-2	+2	+3	+1	0	5	15	14	1/2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	14	18	6	-2	+2	+4	+1	0	5	15	16	1/2

Designer's Notes: The Mirage is the NPC roster's premier (and more or less only) dedicated movement-facilitating support unit. If your OPFOR needs more mobility, this is generally the guy you go to. I've tried to add some additional options throughout the rebake NPCs to give GMs more options for that particular element, but if you're looking for extra movement, the Mirage is still a one-stop shop.

That hasn't really changed, and the Mirage rebake hasn't changed a ton compared to the original version either. It no longer has Reality Flicker as a baseline trait, because as thematic as it is, Dataveil already helps protect the Mirage against things like reaction attacks, so I don't think it needs it as much. And besides which, another NPC is going to be all about teleporting themselves around the map, so this helps differentiate the two of them.

Glitch Scanners being a Quick Tech system doesn't change much about its function, but does open up interactions with things like Jammed, Hack./Slash, and so on that I mentioned in the notes for the Goliath.

The optionals have had similar low-level adjustments, a bit of a change to how Metafold Shove's targeting works, some more heat on Manifest False Idols as well as a duration clarification, the biggest changes are to Warp Targeting and Multiplicity. Warp Targeting has always been a bit of an awkward ability, because it's directly redundant with the Mirage's baseline tech attack, Warp Sensors, as soft cover doesn't stack. So I just made it stack, granting a special form of soft cover that can combo with other soft cover.

As for Multiplicity, while "you thought you were shooting a real target but it was actually an illusion" *is* incredibly thematically appropriate for the Mirage, it's also incredibly powerful and kind of frustrating to be on the receiving end of, a no-telegraph counterspell. It's weird to me that something like the Ace's Barrel Roll has a recharge value, but something like this, even requiring a Systems save, can just be used whenever, plus it combines total Immunity with a generous teleport.

I'm not a huge fan of the way this works, and so I decided to borrow a cue from the Swallowtail's core active. Multiplicity can still be used freely, but now it grants Resistance if the triggering character fails the save rather than outright Immunity, and if they pass the same *then* the target gets a consolation teleport (with some bonus soft cover).

But overall, if you're used to how the Mirage functions out of the core rulebook, there shouldn't be too many surprises here. Pick your slowest allies and blink them around the map, decide whether you want to give out Dataveil or keep it for yourself, that sort of thing.

Operator
Artillery

Tactics: Operators are elite and extremely mobile artillery mechs. They aren't particularly hardy, nor is their **Raptor Plasma Rifle** especially long-ranged compared to other artillery units, but the incredible mobility offered by their **Trace Drive** allows them to teleport around the battlefield at will. This allows them to quickly move into range, shoot, then move away, darting around the outskirts of fights and teleporting to advantageous positions, such as on top of obstructions or terrain, into cover, and anywhere else they can line up an effective shot.

OPFOR Notes:

- Notably short ranged for an **Artillery** unit and very fragile, picking the right positions and moments to teleport in or out of range are crucial to effective use, as well as coordinating with allies rather than simply loitering independently like longer-ranged units might.
- **Strike and Fade** allows choosing whether to focus on offense or defense as circumstances dictate. Optional **teleportation** systems can help enable both bonuses at once.
- Works well against slow targets unable to respond to its advanced mobility, as well as against high **Evasion** or **Invisible** targets thanks to the **Reliable** damage of its **Raptor Plasma Rifle.**

Operator
Mech, Artillery

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	10	10	8	+2	+2	+2	+2	0	5	10	11	1

Base systems:
Raptor Plasma Rifle
Heavy Rifle
+1/2/3
Reliable 3/4/5
Range 12
7/9/11 energy damage
On Critical Hit: This weapon deals **burn** instead of **energy damage.**

Trace Drive
System
The Operator **teleports** when they make their standard move.

Strike and Fade
Trait
Whenever the Operator **teleports** during their turn before making any attacks, they gain **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks with the **Raptor Plasma Rifle** until the end of their turn. Whenever the Operator **teleports** during their turn after making any attacks, all attacks against them receive **+1 Difficulty** until the end of their next turn. If the Operator splits their movement with an attack, they may only choose one of these effects.

Self-Erasure

Trait
When the Operator is destroyed, it immediately self-immolates in a wave of superheated plasma. All characters adjacent to the Operator when this takes place must pass an **Agility** save or take **4/5/6 energy damage** and be rendered only able to draw line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take half damage only. This mech is then removed from the battlefield – it is utterly annihilated.

Optional systems:
Telefrag
Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Operator **teleports** into a space occupied by another character within line of sight and **Range 15.** The target must pass an **Agility** save or take **4/5/6 AP energy damage** and become **Jammed** and **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. On a successful save, they take half damage only. Succeed or fail, the Operator takes **1d6 AP energy damage** and then **teleports** to a new space within **Range 5.**

Overload Shot
Trait
When the Operator attacks with the **Raptor Plasma Rifle**, they may take **4 heat** to treat its **Range** as **Line 12.**

Fade Generator
System, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: The Operator takes damage from a ranged or melee attack.
Effect: The Operator **teleports** their **Speed.** They may take **1d6 heat** to also become **Invisible** until the start of their next turn.

Singularity Grenade
System, Quick Action, Limited 1
The Operator may expend a charge to throw a grenade to a space within **Range 5.** Characters in the **Blast 2** energy pulse (excluding the Operator) must pass a **Systems** save or be **teleported 2 spaces** in a direction of the Operator's choice and treat the Operator as **Invisible** until the end of their next turn. The Operator then **teleports** their **Speed.**

Deniable Asset
Trait
Self-Erasure now deals **6/8/10 damage** (half on a successful save), and when the Operator is destroyed they may immediately **teleport** their **Speed** as a **reaction** before self-immolating.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	12	12	8	+3	+3	+3	+3	0	5	10	13	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	14	14	8	+4	+4	+4	+4	0	5	10	15	1

Designer's Notes: From a rebake that didn't change much, to a rebake that changed a whole bunch.

First off, there is absolutely no reason for the Operator's gun to be as juiced as it is. Setting aside that its multi-attack scaling by tier is directly responsible for it being considered one of the more dangerous NPCs in the game, Range 20 *and* baseline +2 Accuracy is absurd. This is simply too much gun.

Chopping the plasma rifle's range down to 12 and removing all its Accuracy might seem like a drastic overcorrection, but there's a method to this madness. Trace Drive gives the Operator freely available teleportation which means it's free to dart in and out of position without repercussion, and mobility is basically a form of range.

Strike and Fade exists to make up for both the missing Accuracy as well as any increased risk the Operator might incur by having to stick closer to the action, in a way that requires more thoughtful play than simply firing from extreme range before ducking behind cover. Your baseline approach with an Operator rebake will be deciding whether to move into range with a standard move (gaining Accuracy on your attack), then boosting back out, or boosting to move into range and then using Trace Drive to move back out (making yourself harder to hit).

This does require a very different playstyle from the core rulebook Operator. You can no longer safely sit at long range and shoot away with a gun that casually nullifies cover penalties, this version is forced to move closer to the fight. As a result, the rebake Operator is much more likely to want to take advantage of benefits granted by allies that they could previously pass up due to distance. Things like using a Hive's Razor Swarm for cover or taking shelter within an Aegis' Defense Net, now they want to be more of a team player than a, well, solo operator.

Another big change is giving the plasma rifle Reliable damage. Remember how I said I was going to reassign where that went in the NPC roster? This is one such reassignment. Giving the Operator's weapon Reliable helps make up for its loss of baseline Accuracy as well, allowing it to always do something even when it wants to use Strike and Fade defensively, constantly chipping away at targets as it teleports around the battlefield. This also makes the incorporation of Reliable damage into an OPFOR a more deliberate consideration, as Operators aren't as generic-seeming as other NPCs like the Assault are typically viewed as.

The Operator is also frequently seen as a frustrating opponent to fight due to things like Fade Generator and Skirmisher making it hard to pin down and deal with effectively, on top of its other hard to handle qualities. For the rebake, I wanted to lean much harder into the identity of a teleport-oriented skirmisher, hence the rework of Fade Generator into a reactive teleport rather than passive Invisibility, which you can still get a bit of for a heat tax as well as through the limited-use Singularity Grenade. This means the Operator can still try and dance around the map, and if you have one of the teleportation-granting optionals you can gain both Strike and Fade bonuses in a single turn, but once it's flanked or cornered, it's much harder for it to effortlessly get away unscathed.

Telefrag is a pretty weird inclusion in the Operator's kit, a thing that encourages you to teleport *into* the enemy while also dealing self-damage. Even for the potential of doling out Jammed, it's a bunch of stuff that an Operator typically doesn't want to be doing. This version of Telefrag has been changed to work more like using someone as a stepping stone, teleporting into them but then also teleporting back out, and trades out damage scaling for additional utility via Shredded. There's still some self-damage, so it remains a risky move, but there should be more reason to want to use it beyond Telefrag Self-

Erasure Grunt Operator memes now.

Priest
Support

Tactics: Priests are powerful support mechs that harshly punish attackers while protecting selected allies. **Investiture** enables them to empower a single chosen ally such as a powerful striker or defender, while **Dispersal Shield** allows them to protect others as needed. **Investiture** demands that they remain close to their chosen ally, which puts both of them at risk if they become separated.

OPFOR Notes:

- Physically vulnerable, but well protected against tech attacks.
- Many of its powerful defensive abilities only protect allies, leaving itself as a critical target to be focused, and this likelihood should be planned around accordingly.
- Works well against tech attackers, enemies that make multiple attacks or use area-of-effect weapons, and in conjunction with allies that benefit from **Investiture's** empowerment and can help protect it in turn.

Priest
Mech, Support

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	10	12	10	-1	-1	+2	+2	0	5	10	11	1/2

Base systems:

Abjure
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6
The Priest makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target takes **2/3/4 heat** each time they make any attack roll until the end of their next turn.

Hardened Target
Trait
The Priest gains **+1 Accuracy** on **Systems** saves, and **tech attacks** against them receive **+1 Difficulty.**

Investiture
Trait, Quick Action
The Priest links systems with an allied mech or vehicle within **Range 5.** As long as they remain linked and within **Range 5**, the target gets **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks and gains the benefits of **Hardened Target.** If either character becomes **Jammed** or **Stunned**, however, the other character also receives the condition for the same duration or until the link is disabled. The link is disabled if either character is destroyed or moves more than **5 spaces** from the other. The Priest can only link with one character at a time.

Dispersal Shield
System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Priest releases a cloud of miniature drones that cluster around a nearby mech, providing protection. The Priest or an allied character within **Sensors** gains **5/6/7 Overshield** and **Resistance** to damage and heat from the next attack that hits. This effect does not stack.

Optional systems:

Fortress

Trait

Hardened Target gives **+3 Accuracy** on **Systems** saves and deals **+3 Difficulty** on **tech attacks**, instead of **+1.**

Empowered Investiture

Trait, Protocol

The Priest pushes their **Investiture** link to its limit, becoming **Immobilized** while linked this way. The linked character gains **Immunity** to **Impaired** and **Slowed** (and clears them if they already have those conditions), both the Priest and linked character gain **Resistance** to all damage and heat, and the linked character no longer needs to remain within **Range 5** of the Priest. This effect lasts until the end of the linked character's next turn. When this effect ends, the link ends as well, and the Priest becomes **Stunned** until the end of their next turn.

Sanctuary

Trait, Full Tech

The Priest chooses an allied character within **Sensors.** Before attempting to attack that character, characters must first pass a **Systems** save. On a failure, they don't lose the action, but can't target the protected character again until the start of their next turn. This effect lasts until the Priest is destroyed or until the end of the Priest's next turn.

Fractal Assault

Reaction, System, 1/round, Recharge 6+

Trigger: A character linked by **Investiture** takes damage.

Effect: The triggering character must choose one; the damage from the triggering effect is reduced to **0** and this reaction automatically **recharges**, or the triggering character becomes **Stunned** until the end of their next turn.

Feedback

Trait

Whenever a **tech attack** misses the Priest or a character linked by **Investiture**, the attacker takes **2/3/4 heat.**

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
13	12	15	10	-1	-1	+4	+3	0	5	10	13	1/2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	14	18	10	-1	-1	+6	+4	0	5	10	15	1/2

Designer's Notes: The Priest is a bit of a mixed bag. You might assume, looking at its base kit, that it would be all about empowering its Investiture buddy, but then looking elsewhere it seems like maybe it's more about just protecting people in general? And it has a brief sideline in becoming more resistant

to tech attacks for some reason.

In a way, the Priest is a bit of catch-all support, and while rebakes are intended to give NPCs more of a focused identity, I do think in this case that trying to boil them down to one of these elements would take away too many tools from the GM.

So instead, this rebake is aimed at tying those elements together a bit more cohesively, such as having Investiture share the benefits of Hardened Target and/or Fortress with the target. How many people remember that Investiture lets the Investiture target share the Priest's Systems score? It's a pretty regularly overlooked detail, and I think getting to share that anti-tech protection makes for a more valuable effect.

I also think that Dispersal Shield giving 1d3 applications of Resistance is very weird, and have no idea why it works that way. I cut it down to a single dose, then blended it together with the Overshield from Empowered Shield, clearing up more room in the optionals for the Feedback trait, further emphasizing that anti-tech angle if you want to really lean into it.

Empowered Investiture replaces Greater Investiture, while Sanctuary remains untouched, and that leaves Fractal Assault. This is one of those stun effects that I feel iffy about, though at least it's on a recharge, but it's still an optional I find is kind of unfun and unengaging, roll a save or get Stunned, the end. This version turns the effect into more of a choice, which is always an approach I favor when it comes to things like this. Being Stunned sucks, but choosing to become Stunned in order to shut off an NPC's powerful defensive tool feels like a clever tactical gambit (unless the Priest hits the hot 6 on their recharge roll, such is life).

Pyro
Defender

Tactics: Pyros are slow, resilient defenders that deny areas through a combination of **heat** and **burn**, and are especially threatening against characters already suffering from **burn.** Position **Firebreak** where it can protect the most allies from incoming attacks while also threatening to deal burn to anyone who crosses it, allowing the Pyro to follow up with a powerful attack from their **Flamethrower**.

OPFOR Notes:

- Slow and heavily armored, with close-range weaponry, unsuited to chasing down faster enemies or spearheading assaults, but very effective against close-ranged threats.
- Several optional systems create dangerous areas which, in conjunction with **Firebreak**, can make parts of the map hazardous to move through.
- Works best on maps where they can deny areas (such as objectives) and lock down critical chokepoints, and alongside allies that can either move enemies into the dangerous zones they've established or who can deal **heat** and **burn** to enemies themselves.

Pyro
Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	8	8	12	+1	-1	-1	+3	3	2	8	11	1

Base systems:
Flamethrower
Heavy CQB
+1/2/3
4 Heat (Self)
Cone 5
3/4/5 burn
This weapon deals **double burn** to characters that have any **burn.**

Firebreak
Trait
At the end of the Pyro's turn, they create a **Line 5** wall of flame, **4 spaces high**, in free spaces within **Range 3** and line of sight. This wall doesn't block line of sight, but provides **soft cover**; when an attack is made against a character benefiting from this cover, roll **1d6.** On a **4+**, that attack misses. Characters can pass through this wall, but when crossing the wall for the first time in a round or starting their turn overlapping its spaces, they take **2/3/4 burn.** This wall lasts until the start of the Pyro's next turn, or until the Pyro moves or is **Stunned**, and its effect doesn't stack with **Invisible.**

Explosive Vent
System, Full Action
The Pyro clears all heat. All characters within **Burst 2** must pass an **Agility** save or take **heat** equal to **half the amount the Pyro cleared** and be knocked **Prone.**

Insulated

Trait
The Pyro has **Immunity** to **burn.**

Optional systems:
Napalm Bomb
System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Pyro launches a napalm canister that erupts in a **Blast 1** curtain of flame within **Range 5.** All characters within this area must pass an **Agility** save or take **2/3/4 burn** and **2/3/4 heat.** The Pyro may instead target a free area with this **Blast**; if they do, it creates a burning patch on the ground that lasts until this system is used again. Characters that start their turn at least partially within the area or move into it for the first time in a round must pass an **Agility** save or take **2/3/4 burn** and **2/3/4 heat.**

Unshielded Reactor
Trait
Characters that start their turn within **Range 3** of the Pyro or who move into **Range 3** of them for the first time in a round take **2/3/4 heat**, and they make all checks to clear **burn** with **+1 Difficulty** as long as they remain within **3 spaces** of the Pyro.

Superhot
System, Reaction, 1/round, 4 Heat (Self)
Trigger: The Pyro takes damage from an attack.
Effect: The Pyro gains **Resistance** to all damage from the attack. If the attack was a melee attack, the triggering character must pass an **Engineering** save or take **3/4/5 burn.**

Explosive Jet
System, Recharge 5+, Quick Action
Hostile characters within **Burst 2** must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked back outside of the area and knocked **Prone.** The Pyro then flies **5 spaces** in any direction, but must land after completing that move. If the Pyro is in the **Danger Zone**, the **Hull** save is made with **+1 Difficulty** and this system automatically **recharges.**

Lingering Flames
Trait
When the Pyro attacks with the **Flamethrower**, flames continue to burn in **3 free spaces** of their choice within the affected area. When characters start their turn in one of these spaces or enter one for the first time in a round, they take **2/3/4 burn.** These spaces last until the end of the scene, or until the Pyro attacks with the **Flamethrower.**

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
13	9	9	12	+2	-1	-1	+4	3	2	8	13	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	10	10	12	+3	-1	-1	+5	3	2	8	15	1

Designer's Notes: Another member of the Speed 2 Club, the Pyro also suffers from an unfortunate tendency to not effectively advertise to GMs what its primary strengths and tactical purposes are. People see the Pyro and assume it must be some sort of dangerous flamethrower-wielding assault unit, only to be discouraged by its exceptionally slow speed and close range, when what the Pyro actually is (rather unintuitively) is a shield-projecting defender that also happens to have a flamethrower if people get close.

I'm not really interested in turning the Pyro into more of a striker, but I do think there's an argument to be made that its a little too unintuitive for its own good, on top of its low speed making it hard to leverage effectively.

As with the Demolisher, my approach to the Pyro takes the form of expanding its area of influence rather than making it faster. One big way I make this work is by increasing the range at which Firebreak, the new version of the core rulebook's FIREBREAK Shield, can be placed. Also, Firebreak now *actually* sets people on fire, another absent element of the core Pyro that often catches people off-guard to the extent I might consider this to be the most unintuitive NPC ability in the entire game. This new actually fire-based version creates more of a threat for people trying to push through the shield to get to the area the Pyro is contesting since it plays right into the Flamethrower dealing double burn to targets that already have any, a thing the Pyro normally has to rely on successive attacks or outside help to facilitate.

To further assist the Pyro, more of its optionals have been redesigned towards a goal of making the Pyro's part of the map extremely unpleasant to be around. Where the Demolisher and its hammer serve as the dangerous threat keeping people away, the Pyro does this by setting the map on fire, whether it's using Naplam Bomb (now a system instead of a weapon) to drop burning patches on the ground, using Lingering Flames to set even *more* burning patches on the ground, or the expanded range on Unshielded Reactor making the Pyro itself more of a walking hazard.

Superhot has been adjusted to serve as more of a generalized Resistance system along with an additional heat cost (more incentive to make use of Explosive Vent, which itself now has a bigger radius), and additional heat may also come in handy with the revised Explosive Jet, which now automatically recharges if used while the Pyro is in the Danger Zone. As with the Demolisher, I'm not a fan of slapping Acrobat on every single Pyro just to give them more mobility, so this is my solution to that.

Rainmaker
Artillery

Tactics: Rainmakers are one part artillery and one part controller. Their **Skyhammer Salvo** forces characters to avoid certain areas or take guaranteed **Lock On** and damage. They can also dish out delayed damage through optional systems like **Hound Missiles** and **Atlas Missiles** which render areas of the map dangerous to traverse. Like other artillery mechs, Rainmakers are relatively vulnerable on their own.

OPFOR Notes:
- Long range, modest damage, multi-target artillery unit that doesn't require line of sight with its **Missile Pods**, allowing it to keep up constant fire from relative safety.
- **Skyhammer Salvo** and many optional systems require line of sight to use, forcing careful consideration about when to step out and utilize them versus remaining out of line of sight.
- Works well in environments with abundant terrain to take cover behind, and where it can deploy dangerous area effect abilities to hinder foes as they attempt to approach allies or objectives.

Rainmaker
Mech, Artillery

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	8	8	8	+0	+0	+2	+0	1	3	15	11	1

Base systems:
Missile Pods
Main Launcher, Arcing, Knockback 1
+2/4/6
Range 15
4/5/6 explosive damage
This weapon can attack **1-3** targets at a time.

Huntsman
Trait
Against characters with **Lock On**, the **Missile Pods** gain **Smart** and **Seeking.** If the Rainmaker consumes **Lock On** during the attack, the **Missile Pods** also gain **AP** against that target.

Skyhammer Salvo
System, Quick Action
The Rainmaker establishes a **Blast 1** targeting area within line of sight and **Sensors**, visible to all characters. Hostile characters that start their turn within this area (even partially, up to **10 spaces** high) or enter it for the first time during their turn gain **Lock On.** Hostile characters that end their turn within this area are hit by a rocket, taking **4/5/6 explosive damage.** This area lasts until the start of the Rainmaker's next turn.

Optional systems:
Hound Missiles
System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge 6+

Hound Missile (**Size** 1/2, **HP** 10/12/14, **Evasion** 10, **E-Defense** 10, **Tags: Drone, Immunity to Prone, Slowed, and Immobilized**).

The Rainmaker deploys the Hound Missile in an adjacent space and picks a target in **Range 15** and line of sight. At the start of the Rainmaker's turns the missile makes its own standard move, **flying 3 spaces** towards its target, **6** if the target has **Lock On.** It moves directly, maneuvering around cover and terrain if needed. When the missile moves adjacent to its target, or collides with any character, it creates a **Burst 1** explosion. Characters in the affected area must pass an **Agility** save or take **16/20/24 explosive damage.** On a success, they take half damage.

Any hostile character that attempts to move a Hound Missile (i.e. with **Knockback**, push, pull, etc) must pass a contested **Systems** check against the Rainmaker. If they fail, the movement is ignored, that character gains **Lock On**, and the Rainmaker may change the missile's target to that character.

Atlas Missiles
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
The Rainmaker chooses a space on the ground in line of sight and **Range 15**, visible to all characters. The Rainmaker launches a missile that lands at the end of the next round, creating a **Blast 2** explosion centered on that space. Characters in the area must pass an **Agility** save or take **16/20/24 explosive damage.** On a success they take half damage. The Rainmaker can force hostile characters with **Lock On** make this save with **+1 Difficulty**, but they must consume the **Lock On** during the save.

Hades Missiles
System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Rainmaker launches a missile that detonates in a **Cone 3** area within **Range 15**; this doesn't need line of sight, just a possible route to the target. All characters within the area must pass a **Hull** save or take **4/5/6 explosive damage** and be knocked back **3 spaces** in the direction of the **cone.** On a save, they take half damage and are knocked back **1 space.**

Seeker Volley
System, Full Action, Recharge 5+
All hostile characters in line of sight and **Range 15** must pass a **Systems** save or gain **Lock On** and take **4/5/6 explosive damage.** On a success, they take half damage only.

Suppression Salvo
Trait
When hostile characters end their turn within the **Skyhammer Salvo** targeting area, the Rainmaker may hit them with a rocket that deals no damage, but forces them to pass a **Hull** save or become **Slowed** and **Impaired** until the end of their next turn instead.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	10	10	8	+0	+1	+3	+0	1	3	15	13	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size

14	12	12	8	+0	+1	+4	+1	1	3	15	15	1

Designer's Notes: Rainmakers are a unit that end up punching way above their weight in ways that GMs often aren't aware of at first. Looking at the Missile Pods, they don't seem to do that much damage, but the problem comes in the form of the unit's baked-in combo of tossing out Javelin Rockets, then using the Missile Pod to immediately knock people into their triggering area.

Not only is this more damage than you would expect, armor not withstanding, it's just extremely *boring.* It's a combo with no real interactability or counterplay, and so it feels less like a clever combo and more like a perfunctory checklist. All this *and* the Rainmaker gets Reliable damage, to boot. Not a fan.

All right, so first things first, the Reliable damage? Gone. An NPC that can attack up to three independent targets every turn doesn't need Reliable damage, because it has the reliability of making multiple attacks on its side. Javelin Rockets? Get outta here. What I want the Rainmaker to be is a consistent, modest damage artillery unit, something that exerts steady pressure on the PCs rather than threatening them with massive spike damage, and it doesn't need to smack them with extra Javelin Rocket damage to accomplish that.

The core rulebook likens the Rainmaker to a controller, but honestly it really isn't much of one...Javelin Rockets aren't great as an area denial tool, and as mentioned they more or less wind up as just extra damage for the Rainmaker, but what if it *was* more of a controller? And Huntsman, that's kind of a fun trait, what if I did some more with that sort of thing?

Hence the Rainmaker rebake. Skyhammer Salvo gives the Rainmaker the sort of area denial that the Javelin Rockets were ostensibly for, but in a way that doesn't turn in to simply fishing for bigger numbers. On top of that, more of the optionals hook into Lock On in various ways, either applying them (such as Seeker Volley) or consuming them for effect (such as the revised Atlas Missiles). Creating dangerous areas and knocking people around, it's definitely got a controller vibe going for it.

One of the bigger changes is to the infamous and iconic Hound Missiles. Hounds (and their Ultra counterparts, Wolfhounds) are a cool and evocative system in theory, but in practice canny players more or less treat like a free explosive barrel to chuck back at enemies. Reducing its HP scaling makes shooting it down less of a hassle, but the real treat here is the contested Systems check whenever someone tries to forcefully move the missile off-course or throw it in someone's face. You can still attempt these sorts of tactics, nothing's stopping you from giving it a try, but now it's less of a freebie, and if you aren't careful it might literally blow up in your face.

This Rainmaker also sees a bit of a range reduction across the board. This is to give the different artillery NPCs more texture by way of placing them at different effective range bands, such as how the Bombard works out to Range 25 while the Operator now works within Range 10. Range 15 is still decent, and the Rainmaker still benefits from being able to loiter behind line-of-sight obstructing cover while spamming missiles, so I think it'll manage just fine.

Ronin
Striker

Tactics: Ronins are straightfoward, deadly melee strikers that excel against targets that rely on ranged firepower. **Rebound** and **Counter-Ballistic Suite** make it dangerous for enemies to attack Ronins with ranged weapons, but they have no particular defenses against melee or tech attacks, nor do they have any way around things such as **Armor** or **Resistance.**

OPFOR Notes:

- **Carbon Fiber Sword** is a solid, no-frills weapon even without additional benefits from **Counter-Ballistic Suite.**
- With a high base speed and no ranged attack options, make frequent use of **Boost** to close the distance with targets.
- Works well against enemies reliant on ranged weapons, or in missions with objectives that force enemies to come to them.

Ronin
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	10	7	7	+1	+2	-1	-1	0	5	10	10	1

Base systems:
Carbon Fiber Sword
Main Melee
+2/4/6, +1 Accuracy
Threat 2
6/8/10 kinetic damage

Rebound
System, Shield, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: The Ronin takes damage from a **ranged attack.**
Effect: They roll **1d6**: on **4+**, they gain **Resistance** to damage from that attack, and the attacker must repeat the attack against themselves. On **3 or less**, the Ronin may **Boost** towards the triggering attacker.

Counter-Ballistic Suite
Trait
Whenever a hostile character within **Range 5** makes a ranged attack, the Ronin may give them a **Ronin's Mark.** Only one character at a time can have a **Ronin's Mark**; if a new mark is applied, any others are removed. When the Ronin makes a successful attack against a character using the **Carbon Fiber Sword**, it can consume the **Ronin's Mark** to deal **+1d6 bonus damage.**

Optional systems:
Chaff Launchers
Trait
Ranged attacks made by **Engaged** characters against the Ronin receive **+2 Difficulty** instead of **+1 Difficulty**, and the Ronin gains **soft cover** until the start of their next turn whenever they **Boost.**

Instinct Mode
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
The Ronin enters a prepared stance, visible to everyone. Until the end of the Ronin's next turn, the first time each turn that a hostile character in line of sight makes a ranged attack, as a **reaction** the Ronin may first **Boost** towards the triggering attacker and then make an attack against them with the **Carbon Fiber Sword** if they are within **Range.**

Mag Field
Trait
Whenever the Ronin takes damage or effects from missed attacks (e.g. **Reliable**), they may choose a different character within **Range 5** to also take the damage or effects.

Charged Slash
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
A character within **Range 2** must pass an **Agility** save or choose: become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn, or the Ronin chooses one of the target's equipped weapons and the target takes that weapon's damage from a ruptured magazine or power cell, then they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn only.

Extended Blade
System
The Ronin's **Carbon Fiber Sword** becomes **Threat 3.** The first time each turn that the Ronin performs a critical hit with it, all characters of their choice within **Threat** take **2/3/4 kinetic damage**, excluding the target just attacked.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	13	8	7	+2	+3	-1	-1	0	5	10	13	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
22	16	9	7	+3	+4	-1	-1	0	6	10	15	1

Designer's Notes: I wrestled with the Ronin for a while, unsatisfied with it but unsure of exactly what to do with it. The main issue I have with the core rulebook Ronin is that, like the Assault, it's a unit that lacks a strong identity. "Guy with a sword" doesn't cut it, the NPC roster is overflowing with evocative, tactically distinct melee strikers...you have Berserkers and Assassins, you have Cataphracts and Specters. "This guy has a sword," so what? I'm of the opinion that tactics games neither need nor want "generic" units. Even if you have a pressing need for "a guy with a sword," that unit should still have more of an identity beyond just that.

I looked at a few different angles but couldn't find one I liked, until what I realized is that the most iconic element of the Ronin, the bit everyone has at least one memorable moment with, is Deflect. So what if I took that element and ran with it?

The Ronin rebake's identity is "the anti-ranged melee unit." You can still use it as just a guy with a sword if you want, and you can do so much more freely now that it no longer has the dangerous multiplicatively-scaling multi-attacks by tier that used to turn it into a blender at higher levels. But within its optionals you'll now find a variety of tools designed to hinder and harm PCs who rely heavily upon ranged firepower. Instinct Mode now triggers upon hostile ranged attacks, including those not even aimed at the Ronin, while Charged Blade now lets you literally damage someone with their own gun.

Looping back to the base systems, one of the other big changes is that the Ronin no longer gains bonus damage on critical hits as a matter of course. The Echo Edge optional has been folded into a new baseline trait, Counter-Ballistic Suite, which serves as the new form of additional damage dealing. This makes the Ronin roughly still as deadly as it was (by Tier 1 standards, again, scaling multi-attacks are out of the picture, so it'll never be as deadly as it was at Tiers 2-3 and for the better), but in a way that's less down to random chance and more telegraphed. And of course, if you choose to engage the Ronin in honorable melee combat, they won't have a chance to put these new tricks to use.

Scourer
Striker

Tactics: Scourers deal a great deal of damage when they focus on single targets, attacking them multiple times. They can be used to crack tough or slow moving opponents very easily. However, they are much less effective when forced to switch targets, and need to remain still in order to repeatedly fire their **Thermal Lance** without overheating.

OPFOR Notes:

- Shorter than average range, average speed, and lacking any movement abilities means proper positioning is important to maximize the effects of the **Thermal Lance** and **Focus Down.** Be aware that even beneficial movement off-turn will prevent **Cooling Module** from working.
- Tough against energy damage and with good **Armor**, but otherwise low **HP.**
- Works best with allies that can protect them while they establish a firing position or lock enemies down so they can't move out of range.

Scourer
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	8	8	8	+1	+0	+0	+2	2	4	8	10	1

Base systems:
Thermal Lance
Heavy Cannon
+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
4 Heat (Self)
Range 8
6/8/10 energy damage

Focus Down
Trait
When the Scourer hits with the **Thermal Lance**, targets take **5/6/7 burn** if they were also successfully hit with the **Thermal Lance** in the previous round.

Cooling Module
System
At the start of their turn, the Scourer **clears all heat** if they haven't moved – including involuntary movement – since the end of their previous turn.

Ablative Shielding
System
The Scourer has **Resistance** to **energy damage.**

Optional systems:
Supercharged
Trait

Characters affected by **Focus Down** are also **Shredded** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Emergency Vent
System
When the Scourer exceeds their **Heat Cap**, becomes **Jammed**, or becomes **Stunned**, they become **Invisible** until the end of their next turn.

Pulse Laser
System, Protocol, Recharge 6+
The next time the Scourer makes an attack with the **Thermal Lance**, they can attack two targets at a time, dealing half damage on hit. This system automatically **recharges** whenever **Cooling Module** activates.

Melt
System, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
The Scourer makes a ranged attack against an object, deployable or **Drone** within **Range 10**, dealing **20 AP energy damage** on a success. On hit, all characters within a **Burst 2** radius of the target are splashed with molten slag, and count as being successfully hit with the **Thermal Lance.**

Thermal Overload
Trait
If the **Cooling Module** does not activate at the start of the Scourer's turn, the **Thermal Lance** gains **+4 Range**, and on hit all other characters in a **Burst 1** area around the target take **3/4/5 burn.**

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
13	9	9	10	+2	+0	+0	+3	2	4	8	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	10	10	12	+3	+0	+0	+4	2	4	8	14	1

Designer's Notes: Unlike the Assault, the Scourer is a ranged striker that has a much more solid identity beyond "guy with a gun," and I like them for that reason. The dynamic with their Cooling Module makes them fun to mess with, rewarding players for interrupting their self-cooling, and Focus Down nicely telegraphs their power in ways that gives targets a chance to respond. All in all, it's a real solid NPC.

Most of the tinkering here is in the optionals, and I'll just start by saying "what the hell is up with Flash Lens?" Again, why does this NPC need a big AoE Jammed ability? That is completely outside the Scourer's wheelhouse, and is entirely unnecessary. Sorry, but I don't think a Striker needs the ability to apply one of the rudest status debuffs in the game in a Cone 5 area.

Setting that aside, it's largely a matter of touching up some stuff here and there. For example, Melt has always been something of a lackluster optional, but by tying it into the Scourer's gameplan of wanting

to hit people who are primed for Focus Down, it makes it a more interesting self-combo piece, and likewise the new version of Pulse Laser (no longer an optional weapon) does the same thing, spreading around the Scourer's pool of potential targets to, well, focus down.

Thermal Overload, meanwhile, takes things in a different direction, giving the Scourer a power boost whenever Cooling Module *doesn't* proc. It's not something the Scourer can reliably trigger by itself, lacking any sort of off-turn movement, but with the right allies you could probably pull it off and do your best Tokugawa impression. Right up until your reactor melts down, anyway.

Scout
Support

Tactics: Scouts are support mechs designed to increase the damage dealt by their allies. They deal no damage themselves, but **Marker Rifle** assists allies in hitting and damaging priority targets and **Rebound Scan** prevents enemies from hiding or benefiting from being **Invisible.** Like most support mechs, Scouts aren't especially resilient on their own, but **Cloaking Field** can help keep them and their allies alive.

OPFOR Notes:

- Deals no damage on its own by default, but helps its allies deal more damage to make up for it.
- Serves as a major countermeasure to **Invisible** enemies and those that are **Hidden.**
- Works well in conjunction with NPCs that struggle to get through **Armor** or **Resistance** or that like additional **Accuracy** on attacks.

Scout
Mech, Support

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	12	10	6	-2	+2	+3	-1	0	6	20	11	1/2-1

Base systems:
Marker Rifle
Main Rifle
Smart
+2/4/6, +1 Accuracy
Range 15
0 damage
On Hit: Target receives **Lock On**, and they become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

Sight
Trait
The Scout ignores **Hidden** and **Invisible.**

Rebound Scan
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 4+
The Scout makes a tech attack against a character in **Sensors.** On a success, the target and all hostile characters within **Range 3** of the target lose **Hidden** and **Invisible** and can't regain either status or benefit from any cover until the start of the Scout's next turn. The Scout may choose to automatically hit allied characters with this tech attack; if they do, this system automatically **recharges.**

Cloaking Field
System, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
The Scout generates a **Burst 3** cloaking field that lasts until the end of their next turn. The Scout and any allied characters within the affected area are **Invisible**, but the Scout is **Immobilized** while it is active.

Optional systems:

Spotter
Trait
While adjacent to the Scout, allied characters gain **+1 Accuracy** on all attack rolls.

Sensor Link
System, Full Action
The Scout chooses an allied character within **Range 3** and patches their own sensor feed directly into that ally's systems, becoming **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn. That character gains the benefits of **Sight.** This effect lasts until the Scout is destroyed or until the end of the Scout's next turn.

Orbital Strike
System, Full Action, Recharge 5+
The Scout chooses a space on the ground, within line of sight and **Range 20**; all characters know that it has been chosen. The Scout calls in an orbital bombardment that hits at the end of the next round, creating a **Blast 2** explosion centered on that space. Characters in the affected area must make **Agility** saves. On a failure, they take **12/16/20 energy damage** and are knocked **Prone.** On a success, they take half damage and remain standing.

Expose Weakness
Trait
Characters that are successfully attacked with the **Marker Rifle** gain a **Scout's Mark.** Only one character can be marked this way at a time, and marking another character clears any marks from the last one. The next time an ally successfully hits a character with a **Scout's Mark**, they may consume the mark to choose one of the following:

- The target takes **+1d6 bonus damage.**
- The target is knocked **Prone.**
- The target is pushed **2 spaces** in a direction of the attacker's choice and **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Pathfinder
Trait, 1/round
After the Scout successfully attacks with the **Marker Rifle**, an allied character within **Sensors** and line of sight can **Boost** as a reaction.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	15	13	6	-2	+4	+4	-1	0	7	20	13	1/2-1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
8	18	16	6	-2	+5	+5	-1	0	8	20	15	1/2-1

Designer's Notes: The Scout does something that I am extremely not a fan of, which is tying persistent debuffs to an unconsumed Lock On. In *Lancer*, most debuffs and conditions have a set endpoint,

usually the start or end of someone's turn. There are exceptions, but those tend to be gated behind more involved prerequisites, like the Breacher's Break Armor requiring it to land multiple hits with a very inaccurate weapon.

The Marker Rifle, by contrast, is simply a long range, highly accurate weapon that paints someone with a Lock On that also hits them with Shredded and complete anti-stealth and lasts until the Lock On goes away. How do you make a Lock On go away if the GM decides not to consume it? Well, you can Stabilize, and uhhhhh.

Inflicting a permanent, ongoing set of debuffs with a single quick action that then requires the target to spend what is likely a full action to get rid of them is, in my opinion, a poor dynamic to encourage. It puts the target inescapably on the back foot for very little opportunity cost.

As a result, the Marker Rifle has been completely refigured. For starters, it no longer ties anything to Lock On duration. Hitting someone with it now simply Locks On to them, and also applies Shredded until the end of their next turn, no fuss, no muss. Second, the anti-stealth functionality has been completely shifted over to the new Rebound Scan, no longer a weirdly close-ranged ability but now a tech attack that can de-stealth people at a distance.

In terms of its optionals, the core rulebook Scout is probably most famous for Orbital Strike, which is a very funny ability that I'm happy to keep intact. Spotter is also fine, and plays into that Scout/Sniper fantasy. The rest, however, could use some work. Expose Weakness, like Retribution earlier, has been consolidated down to a much simpler and more bounded +1d6 bonus damage, but now gives a selection of other options as well.

Meanwhile, I'm not particularly enamored of System Flayer (cool name though) and Dataveil belongs to the Mirage as far as this supplement is concerned, so those have been replaced with Sensor Link (another way for the Scout to pass along vital anti-stealth capabilities if it needs it) as well as Pathfinder, something to spread the beneficial movement love further outside of just the Mirage.

Seeder
Controller

Tactics: Seeders specialize in area denial, controlling enemy movement with their mines. Since Seeders can place mines each turn, they can quickly turn part of the battlefield into a mess when left to their own devices. Allied characters don't trigger Seeders' mines until the Seeder is destroyed, but are affected by them if they're caught in the explosion. Seeders have a variety of mine types at their disposal, allowing them to set up traps tailored to their enemies' weaknesses.

OPFOR Notes:

- As mines are visible on the map to all characters, they likely won't deliberately wander into their detonation range. Make use of **Grav-Grenade Launcher** or **Grav Spikes** to move characters into them, or use them as a visible deterrent to encourage enemies to avoid areas of the map like critical objective points or chokepoints.
- High **Sensors** and a good **Systems** score allows them to make use of actions like **Lock On** or **Invade** from a distance while preparing minefields in advance.
- Works well in conjunction with allies that can move enemies around with forced movement, such as pushes, pulls, or **knockback.**

Seeder
Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	7	10	8	+0	+0	+2	+0	2	4	15	12	1

Base systems:
Grav-Grenade Launcher
Main Launcher
+2/4/6
Arcing
Range 8, Blast 1
2/3/4 explosive damage
On Hit: Targets are pulled **1 space** in a direction of the Seeder's choice

Lay Mines
System, Mine, Quick Action, 1/turn
The Seeder deploys one of the mines below in a free space within **Range 3.** Once deployed, the Seeder's mines detonate when a hostile character moves adjacent to them, creating a **Burst 1** explosion that affects both allied and hostile characters.

- **Sealant Mine:** Characters in the area must pass a **Hull** save or become **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn, then **Slowed** until the end of their subsequent turn.
- **Explosive Mine:** Characters in the area must pass an **Agility** save or take **8/12/16 explosive damage.** On a success, they take **half damage.**
- **Shock Mine:** Characters in the area must pass a **Systems** save or become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn, then **Impaired** until the end of their subsequent turn.
- **Thermite Mine:** Characters in the area must pass an **Engineering** save or take **4/5/6 heat** and have only line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take

half heat only.

The Seeder may have up to **three mine**s deployed at a time; if they deploy another mine, one of their currently deployed mines of their choice disarms and deactivates. When the Seeder is destroyed, its deployed mines remain active, but now detonate whenever any character moves adjacent to them.

Safety Net
Trait
The Seeder never triggers or sets off **Mines** or other proximity-based systems unless it chooses to do so.

Optional systems:
Grav Spike
System, Quick Action
A character within line of sight and **Range 5** must succeed on a **Systems** save, or a grav spike attaches itself to them. The Seeder can detonate all grav spikes as a **protocol**, causing targets to automatically take **4/5/6 AP explosive damage** and be pulled **3 spaces** in a direction of their choice. Characters can remove a grav spike from themselves by passing a **Systems** save as a **quick action.**

FASCAM
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
The Seeder launches a rocket which scatters a field of explosive micromines over a **Blast 3** area within **Sensors;** this area can overlap with obstructions (like cover or terrain) when deployed, but not characters. Characters who enter this area or make any movement while within it for the first time in a round must pass a **Systems** save or step on a mine, taking **5/6/7 explosive damage.** Only one field of micromines can exist at a time, and if a new one is created, the previous one deactivates.

Speed Deployer
Trait
Lay Mines may now deploy up to **three mines** at a time instead of just **one.** If the Seeder deploys more than one mine at a time this way, this trait can't be used again until one of their mines detonates or is disarmed by a hostile character.

Hopping Mines
Trait
Mines deployed with **Lay Mines** also activate when hostile characters fly or move over or adjacent to them, up to **10 spaces** high. The mines jump up to **10 spaces**, detonating and affecting all characters within their area.

Last Line
Trait, Reaction, Limited 1
Trigger: A hostile character moves within **Range 3** of the Seeder.
Effect: Choose a mine that can be deployed with **Lay Mines**; the triggering character immediately detonates a hidden mine buried under the ground of that type. This reaction may still be used even if the Seeder is destroyed.

If a hostile character is aware of this trait (i.e. via **Scan,** or automatically when the Seeder is destroyed), they may attempt a contested **Systems** check against the Seeder as a **quick action** while the Seeder (or its wreck) is within **Sensors.** If that character succeeds, this trait is disabled. This check automatically

succeeds against destroyed Seeders.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	8	11	8	+1	+0	+3	+0	2	4	15	15	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	9	12	8	+2	+0	+4	+0	2	4	15	18	1

Designer's Notes: So here's the thing about Seeders; a long while back, Tom apparently suggested in the course of a conversation that Seeder mines were supposed to be genuinely *hidden* from players, like hidden information Battleship-style. I wasn't present for this conversation and it was never part of any official errata, so I can only relay this secondhand.

Now is this actually the intent behind Seeder mines, in a game that otherwise has no hidden info or "fog of war" going on? For the purposes of this supplement, the answer is one that's irrelevant and that I have no interest in trying to figure out. What *is* relevant is that the Seeder rebake's mines operate 100% identically to PC mines in every respect. They are visible on the map when placed, they detonate when characters move adjacent to them instead of directly on them, and that's the end of that.

How do the rebake Seeder's mines work? Go to page 106 in the Lancer core rulebook and you'll have all the answers you need. Making Seeder mines work the same as PC mines is, to me, important because the fewer weird exceptions there are between shared mechanical systems, the easier it is for everyone to figure out and remember how things work on both sides of the table.

So besides that, what else has changed? Well, a bunch of stuff. For one, Seeders are now limited to a max of three deployed mines at a time. This falls in line with other changes made throughout this supplement as part of my "keep the battlefield less cluttered by accumulating deployables" initiative. The Seeder can still continue to place mines as needed, old ones will just deactivate as they do. This means the Seeder's role is more about actively curating a living minefield as the situation warrants rather than hanging back and playing Stardew Valley until the PCs wander into their part of the map.

Stun mines are also gone, for reasons I hope should be explanatory by this point, replaced with Thermite Mines. Det Spike, kind of a weird and unnecessary system, has been replaced with FASCAM to give the Seeder more area coverage if they need it, while Tripwires is wholly unnecessary with Seeder mines now covering more of a trigger radius by default.

Grav Spike remains, along with an adjustment to the Grav-Grenade Launcher which gives it omnidirectional movement instead of just Knockback, enabling the Seeder to more actively push people into their mines. And finally, Last Line gives you the ability to play with a bit of that "hidden mine" fantasy if you really want, in a more controlled and less cumbersome fashion.

Sentinel
Defender

Tactics: Sentinels are "punishment" defenders that focus on establishing dangerous zones of **Overwatch** to protect allies and lock down areas on the map. They are fairly short-range attackers, relying on positioning to get the most from their kit, and don't have the means to directly mitigate or redirect damage the way other defenders do.

OPFOR Notes:

- A flexible, well-rounded unit combining good damage with area-denial and zone control capabilities.
- **Eye of Midnight** is a potent way to increase the effectiveness of **Overwatch**, but **Slowed** can interfere with other abilities such as **Bodyguard** and **Wrath-Lock.** Consider which is likely to be more useful at any given moment.
- Works well with a variety of compositions, but benefits from being in the thick of things and close to allies where its damaging **Combat Shotgun** and **Overwatch** capabilities can be put to good use.

Sentinel
Mech, Defender

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	8	8	8	+2	+1	+1	+1	1	4	10	10	2

Base systems:
Combat Shotgun
Main CQB
+1/2/3
Reliable 2/3/4
Range 5, Threat 3
6/8/10 kinetic damage

Retractable Sword
Main Melee
+2/4/6
Threat 1
4/5/6 kinetic damage

Eye of Midnight
System, Quick Action
The Sentinel becomes **Slowed**, but can take the **Overwatch** reaction **1/turn** instead of **1/round.** Additionally, they may attack with **Overwatch** using the **Combat Shotgun** when hostile characters enter, leave, or exit spaces within their **Threat** no matter whether they started their movement there. Once activated, this effect lasts until it is deactivated as a **quick action.**

Guardian
Trait

Adjacent allied characters can use the Sentinel for **hard cover.**

Optional systems:
Punisher Ammunition
Trait
Characters hit by the Sentinel's **Overwatch** attacks also become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Bodyguard
Trait, Protocol, Reaction
The Sentinel chooses an allied character within **Range 5** as their ward and gains the **Reflexive Blow** reaction, which can be taken as many times per round as it is triggered.

Reflexive Blow
Reaction
Trigger: Someone attacks the Sentinel's ward.
Effect: The Sentinel may move their **Speed** towards their ward by the most direct route possible, then attack the inciting character with **Overwatch.** This reaction interrupts and resolves before the triggering action, ignores engagement, and doesn't provoke reactions.

Wrath-Lock
Trait, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: A hostile character in line of sight moves.
Effect: The Sentinel may **Boost** towards the triggering character, and the triggering character gains **Lock On.**

Impaler
System, 1/round
When the Sentinel hits with **Overwatch,** their target must pass a **Hull** save or become **Immobilized** and **Jammed** until the end of their next turn.

Marker Shells
Trait
Characters damaged by the Sentinel's **Combat Shotgun** (including **Reliable** damage) gain a **Sentinel's Mark.** Whenever the Sentinel makes an **Overwatch** attack against a marked character, they gain **+1 Accuracy** and ignore **Invisible.** All **Sentinel's Marks** are cleared at the start of the Sentinel's turn.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
20	11	11	8	+3	+2	+2	+2	1	4	10	12	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
24	13	13	8	+4	+3	+3	+3	1	5	10	14	2

Designer's Notes: The Sentinel is a pretty solid, well-rounded unit that struggles just a bit to

accomplish its primary objective. Ironically, I think the Sentinel makes a better "generic guy with a gun" than the Assault does, forced to advance closer before shooting, relatively tough but without any defensive surprises.

Nonetheless, the Sentinel's primary aim is to be an Overwatch-oriented zone controller, a defender of the punishment variety. However, with shorter range than its cousin the Archer and with how the Overwatch rules in particular work, punishing those who leave but not those who enter, it can be hard at times for the Sentinel to really make players feel properly threatened by its Threat zone.

To address this, the Sentinel rebake borrows from the famously useful PC-side Vanguard talent. When Eye of Midnight is active, the Sentinel can now use Overwatch against characters entering its Threat radius as well as leaving it. This makes them much more effective at punishing people who try moving past them to get to whatever it is they're guarding.

Their Combat Shotgun is also the beneficiary of Reliable damage, making it the third NPC in this supplement to feature it as part of their base kit. Like the Archer, the Sentinel having Reliable damage makes their reaction attacks more punishing and less something that could potentially whiff outright, and this comes into play even more with the new Marker Shells optional. Wrath-Lock is a cool name but the core rulebook version is sort of anemic in practice, so I shamelessly stole it for a revised version of Rapid Response. Bodyguard works more or less how it used to, but with some added movement to ensure the Sentinel is properly able to exact retribution.

Oh, and I also made it bigger. The Sentinel joins the ranks of other rebaked NPCs like the Breacher and Bombard, going from Size 1 to Size 2. This upscaling not only makes it easier to use its Guardian trait to provide cover for its allies, larger ones included, but it increases its overall map footprint, allowing it to threaten more of an area with potential Overwatch attacks. As with its upsized cousin the Breacher, the Sentinel has had its speed slightly reduced, going from 5/5/6 to 4/4/5, and once again due to its larger size equaling a larger radius of effective coverage.

Sniper
Artillery

Tactics: Rightly feared, Snipers are devastating when it comes to dealing focused, long-range damage. Using **Sniper's Mark**, they can deal direct structure damage, bypassing most conventional defenses such as **Armor** or **Resistance.** Opponents can avoid this with clever use of cover, or by dropping **Prone.** The Sniper's main downside is a lack of mobility, as their rifle possesses both **Ordnance** and requires a full action to either fire or reload.

OPFOR Notes:

- Long range and high single-target damage, but requires direct line of sight.
- The **Anti-Materiel Rifle** has a longer range than that of **Sensors**, which means that acquiring **Lock On** against distant targets will require teamwork from allies.
- Works well on maps with elevated positions where it can acquire long, uninterrupted sightlines, and with allies that can support it with **Accuracy** or help negate **Invisible.**

Sniper
Mech, Artillery

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	10	8	6	-2	+1	+2	+0	0	4	15	11	1

Base systems:
Anti-Materiel Rifle
Superheavy Rifle
+2/4/6, +1 Accuracy
AP, Loading, Ordnance
Range 20
10/15/20 kinetic damage
This weapon does not gain **Accuracy** from attacking **Prone** targets.

Sniper's Mark
System, Full Action
A character within **Range 20** and line of sight gains the **Sniper's Mark.** Against targets with the **Sniper's Mark**, the Sniper gains **+1 Accuracy** on attacks with the **Anti-Materiel Rifle** and may choose to deal **1 structure damage** instead of its usual damage on hit; attacks made against a character with a **Sniper's Mark** this way can't be redirected, rerolled, or forced to miss by hostile effects except for **Invisible** and **Difficulty.**

Characters know when they have the **Sniper's Mark.** They ignore its effects if they are in cover (i.e. behind **hard cover** or within a zone that grants **soft cover**) or **Prone.** On their turn, characters with the **Sniper's Mark** may drop **Prone** as a **free action.**

The Sniper can only mark one character at a time, but can transfer the **Sniper's Mark** to another character within **Range 20** and line of sight as a **full action** or whenever the Sniper reloads the **Anti-Materiel Rifle.**

Climber
Trait
The Sniper treats all solid surfaces as flat ground for the purposes of movement; they can move and remain stationary on any surface without penalty, including overhanging and vertical surfaces, although they begin to fall if they are knocked **Prone.**

Optional systems:
Sharpshooter
Trait
The Sniper can attempt a called shot before attacking characters with a **Sniper's Mark** using the **Anti-Materiel Rifle.** This attack functions as usual, with an additional effect on a successful attack.

The Sniper may choose from the following:

- **Target Head:** Targets must pass a **Hull** save or only be able to draw line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn.
- **Target Legs:** Targets must pass an **Agility** save or be **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn.
- **Target Hardpoints:** Targets must pass a **Systems** save or become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn.
- **Target Body:** Targets must pass an **Engineering** save or become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

Shift Sights
Trait, Protocol, Recharge 5+
The Sniper may transfer the **Sniper's Mark** to a character within **Range 2** of the currently marked character.

Defensive Grapple
System, Recharge 4+, Quick Action, Reaction
The Sniper uses a grappling hook to **fly** to any free space that ends on an object or surface within **Range 5**, including vertical and overhanging surfaces. The Sniper also gains the **Relocation** reaction.

Relocation
Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: A hostile character in line of sight moves.
Effect: The Sniper uses **Defensive Grapple.**

Moving Target
Trait, Reaction, 1/round
Trigger: A hostile character in line of sight and **Range 20** moves.
Effect: The Sniper interrupts the movement. The character must either immediately stop, give up all remaining movement, and fall **Prone**, or they gain the **Sniper's Mark** (or it transfers to them if another character already has it); if they already have the **Sniper's Mark**, the Sniper instead may make an immediate attack against them with the **Anti-Materiel Rifle.**

Deadeye
Trait
The Sniper gets **+1 Accuracy** on attacks with the **Anti-Materiel Rifle** against characters that did not

move their **Speed** or more during their turns.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	13	9	6	-2	+2	+3	+0	0	4	15	13	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	16	10	6	-2	+3	+4	+0	0	4	15	15	1

Designer's Notes: There's a very unusual dynamic with Sniper's Mark, where in many cases, especially as you go up in tier, the Sniper might not actually *want* to spend time marking a target versus just simply shooting them. And why not? Their weapon deals big damage with exceptional accuracy, and it already requires reloading, so any actions not spent doing either shooting or reloading is a big drain on the Sniper's action economy. There are cases where dealing 1 structure damage directly, though certainly psychologically impactful, can be *less* effective than simply dumping 15 or 20 HP worth of damage into someone and letting it overflow into successive structure bars.

So reworking Sniper's Mark was a big element of this rebake, trying to find a way to make it and the dynamic of hitting the deck to avoid it more worthwhile and engaging on both ends of the scope...this is why the Anti-Materiel Rifle no longer gains Accuracy against Prone targets, because going prone in *Lancer* doesn't mean it's harder to shoot you, quite the opposite in fact, which can make voluntarily going prone against a Sniper feel kind of silly when what you're doing is just making it easier for them to score a hit on you anyway.

Rather than giving Sniper's Mark more raw offensive power, a thing I don't think the Sniper needs, I've focused on making it more about the the impending threat, unable to divert or reroll the attack outside of things like cover or Invisibility...no NOAH, no SISYPHUS, no Camus' Razor, if the Sniper has you marked, your choices are limited.

A number of the reworked optionals play into this dynamic, like Sharpshooter (formerly Selective Loader) and Shift Sights. Maybe the biggest change here is to Moving Target, previously a favorite way to juice the Sniper's action economy with free reloads or off-turn shooting, it now no longer enables the same sort of tactics it once did. Some GMs may see this as a big nerf, but I'm of the opinion that as ominous as Moving Target can be, it's healthier for the Sniper to not have ways to circumvent those particular restrictions.

Of the Sniper's defensive optionals, I elected to cut Shroud Charge (functionally similar to the core rulebook Assassin's Cloud Projector, renamed in this supplement to Shroud Projector in order to really mess with people) in favor of the more distinct Defensive Grapple, which neatly ties into the Climber trait as well.

Specter
Striker

Tactics: Specters are mobile strikers that shine against foes that make the mistake of being caught alone. Use **Prowl** along with their high **Speed** to get them across the front lines so they can find vulnerable solo targets, like snipers and artillery. Specters are permanently **Invisible**, which is key to their survivability; they aren't very resilient, but they can **Hide** any time, provided their **Tactical Cloak** isn't disabled.

OPFOR Notes:

- Mobile and difficult to hit, prefers seeking out isolated targets.
- Performance of the **Monowire Sword** degrades against targets with **Armor.**
- Works well alongside allies that can use forced movement to separate enemies from each other, and against targets that prefer to sit far in the backline without an escort.

Specter
Mech, Striker

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	10	8	7	-2	+3	+1	+0	0	4	5	10	1

Base systems:
Monowire Sword
Main Melee
+2/4/6
Threat 3
5/6/7 kinetic damage
Armor is doubled against this weapon.

Prowl
System, Quick Action
The Specter moves spaces equal to their **Speed**, then becomes **Hidden.** This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions.

Tactical Cloak
Trait
The Specter is permanently **Invisible**. As a **quick action 1/round**, a character can engage in a contested **Systems** check with the Specter to attempt to disable their cloak; all characters are aware of this. The Specter must be within their **Sensors** for them to attempt this check, and it may be attempted even if the Specter is **Hidden.** If they succeed, this trait is disabled until the end of the Specter's next turn. If they fail, the Specter may teleport their **Speed.**

Hunt
Trait
The **Monowire Sword** deals double damage when no other characters are adjacent to the target besides the Specter (bonus damage is not doubled).

Optional systems:

Step

Trait, Quick Action, Recharge 5+

The Specter **teleports** to a free space within **Range 50** and line of sight.

Drain Systems

System, Full Tech, +2/4/6

The Specter makes a tech attack against an adjacent character. On a success, the target becomes **Stunned.** This effect lasts until a character other than the Specter starts their turn adjacent to the target or moves adjacent to the target.

Lure

System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 4+

The Specter makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors**. On a success, that character must choose: move their **Speed** towards the Specter, or become **Slowed** and **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Ghostwalk

System, Full Action

The Specter becomes **Intangible** until the start of their next turn and moves spaces equal to their **Speed.** At the start of their next turn, their next attack with the **Monowire Sword** gains **+1 Accuracy** and deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on a critical hit. This effect does not stack.

Machine Pistol

Auxiliary CQB

+2/4/6

Range 5, Threat 3

3/4/5 kinetic damage

The Specter can move **2 spaces** in any direction before or after attacking with this weapon. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke **reactions.**

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	14	10	7	-2	+4	+2	+1	0	5	5	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
10	18	12	7	-2	+5	+3	+1	0	6	5	14	1

Designer's Notes: Another NPC that once boasted tier-scaling multi-attacks, but no longer. With that dead and buried, the Specter is free to continue tormenting people with the *other* element that players everywhere hate, Invisibility.

And players really do seem to hate invisible enemies, to a degree that is sometimes funny. Stick one invisible enemy in an OPFOR and that's the one they'll remember. The Specter, an NPC defined by

being permanently invisible, is therefore naturally pretty infamous. Doing a ton of damage with multiple attacks, each of which is also getting an additional +5 damage due to Hunt, probably helps contribute to those unpleasant memories.

Both the Monowire Sword and Hunt have been refigured in this rebake to be less rude and encourage the predation of squishy, unarmored backliners, but in my infinite mercy I've also give PC groups too stubborn to pack a Lotus Projector a way to address the see-through elephant in the room, baking in a way to break the Specter's Tactical Cloak directly into the trait itself. It's not the most action efficient thing in the world, but it isn't meant to be...much like Improvised Attacks, this is something you do if you're desperate and have no better options and you really want to kill this guy *now.*

Out of all the NPCs with systems and abilities that cause Stunned, I actually decided to let the Specter keep Drain Systems because I think its interactive dynamic is more interesting than Sap or Stun Mines. I then decided to lean into that angle and give the Specter another tech attack in Lure, and a fancier, Intangible-utilizing version of the old Weakness Analyzer in Ghostwalk, adding some Mourning Cloak flavor to things while increasing the amount of stuff the Specter can actively attempt beyond just sneaking and stabbing.

I kept the Machine Pistol too. It's a very superfluous weapon in the core rulebook version outside of making heroic sacrifices for the Monowire Sword, but with a little bit of extra mobility attached to it, I think it serves enough of a purpose to justify keeping around.

Support
Support

Tactics: Supports are bulky mechs that can't deal any damage but have access to powerful **HP** restoration and **condition**-clearing effects. Despite their resilience, they have no way to defend themselves and need to remain close to their allies in order to be effective. **Restock Drones** are vulnerable to being destroyed before they can be used by allies, so be sure to deploy them carefully to ensure they aren't wasted.

OPFOR Notes:

- Fast and reasonably tough for a **Support** unit, but completely without any way of dealing damage to enemies outside of **Improvised Attack.**
- While many traits and systems require adjacency or only work within **Range 5**, longer-reaching **Sensors** enables the use of supplementary abilities such as **Lock On** and **Invade** from a distance. Up close, **Ram** and **Grapple** can be used to assist allies as well.
- Works well against enemy compositions that rely heavily upon imposing debilitating **conditions** such as **Immobilized** or **Jammed**, and can work together with a wide variety of allies depending on optional systems (such as using **Desant Hardpoints** to increase the mobility of slower allies).

Support
Mech, Support

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
15	8	8	8	+1	-2	+0	+2	1	5	10	10	2

Base systems:
Sealant Gun
System, Quick Action
The Support chooses a character within line of sight and **Range 5**, allied or hostile:

- **Allied:** The target clears all **burn**, but becomes **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.
- **Hostile:** The target must pass an **Agility** save or become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. Succeed or fail, a **Burst 1** area around them becomes **difficult terrain** for the rest of the scene.

Restock Drone
System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge 5+
Restock Drone (**Size** 1/2, **HP** 5/8/10, **Evasion** 10, **E-Defense** 10, **Tags: Drone**)

This drone can be deployed hovering in a space within **Range 5.** The next time an allied character moves through or adjacent to the drone, it clamps on and discharges its reserves, letting them either regain **5/8/10 HP** or reload one **Loading** weapon.

Nano-Repair Cloud
Trait
While they are adjacent to the Support, allied characters roll twice on all saves and mech skill checks and choose the higher result.

Optional systems:

Desant Hardpoints

Trait

Adjacent, non-**Immobilized** allied characters can climb onto the Support as a **quick action.** While riding, they occupy the same space, move when the Support moves (even if they're **Slowed**), and benefit from **soft cover.** If they or the Support are knocked **Prone, Stunned, Immobilized,** or destroyed, they land **Prone** in adjacent spaces. Riders can climb down as part of any movement away.

The Support can carry one **Squad** or characters whose own combined **Size** is less than their own.

Remote Cloud

System, Quick Action

The Support releases a **Blast 2** nanite cloud within **Range 5.** Allied characters within this area gain **+1 Accuracy** on all checks and saves. This effect does not stack with other **Remote Clouds.** The cloud lasts until the end of the scene, until the Support is destroyed, or until the Support uses this system again.

Remote Reboot

Trait, Full Action, Recharge 6+

The Support clears any two of the following conditions currently affecting an allied character in **Range 5: Impaired, Jammed, Stunned,** and **Slowed**. That character may then either move up to their **Speed** or stand from **Prone.**

Empowered Cloud

Trait

When they start their turn adjacent to the Support, allied characters may clear one **condition.** The Support takes **4 heat** for each **condition** cleared this way.

Latch Drone

System, Drone, Full Action, Recharge 6+

Latch Drone (**Size** 1/2, **HP** 5/8/10, **Evasion** 10, **E-Defense** 10, **Tags: Drone**)

This self-deploying drone clamps onto a character within **Range 5**, occupying the same space and moving with them. While the drone is attached, the target regains **5/8/10 HP** at the start of each of their turns and gains **+1 Accuracy** on all checks, saves, and attacks. Enemies can target the drone with attacks. Only one **Latch Drone** can be deployed at a time, and if a new one is deployed (or the Support is destroyed) the old one disintegrates and is destroyed.

At higher levels:

Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
18	10	10	8	+1	-2	+1	+4	1	5	10	12	2

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
22	12	12	8	+1	-2	+2	+6	1	5	10	14	2

Designer's Notes: The Support, the NPC named for its role, is an interesting unit in theory, possessing virtually no offensive capability whatsoever outside of Improvised Attacks. No guns, not even any hacks beyond the basic Invade, it is in theory the purest support that a support can get.

In practice? In practice it's a lot of optionals that overlap with each other (hey look, yet another way to clear conditions) or are of dubious value (a full action Recharge 6+ to let someone regain...2 HP).

Most of the changes are in the optionals list, which is full of clunkers. You do not need both Remote Reboot *and* Defensive Pulse, pick one and stick with it. I stuck with Remote Reboot and jazzed it up a bit, then made Remote Cloud more worth taking by replacing its negligible HP restoration with something more distinct.

Of course, it wouldn't be an I-can't-believe-it's-not-a-Lancaster without its own version of MULE Harness, opening up a new dimension of allied mobility enhancement. That plus a base Speed increase helps the Support respond to critical situations where proximity for traits like Nano-Repair Cloud and Empowered Cloud (yeah I kept that one too, but I gave it a heat tax so you can't get too comfortable with the free condition clears) is vital.

Baseline, it's largely the same except that the Restock Drone can now help reload things for people who don't necessarily need the healing, just a little quality of life tweak to broaden the Support's portfolio. Drone HP values are also standardized between the Restock Drone and Latch Drone. I've been doing that throughout the rebakes where I feel it's necessary, shooting drones is already a bit of a niche use of one's time that I don't think the Latch Drone needs to scale the way it does.

Witch
Controller

Tactics: Witches are no-nonsense controllers that use **Tear Down** to inflict heat and **Blind** to shut down ranged attackers. **Predatory Logic** gives them a tool to use against characters with powerful heavy weapons, especially ones with **Loading** or **Limited** charges. Targets generally have opportunities to mitigate their more potent abilities, though this often comes at the cost of their actions.

OPFOR Notes:

- High heat dealing capability and access to powerful hard control systems, but has only limited means to deal actual damage.
- Multiple abilities gain power when used against targets in the **Danger Zone**. Prioritize dangerous foes and use **Tear Down** to quickly ramp their **heat** higher, or take advantage of enemies that put themselves in the **Danger Zone** for various benefits.
- Works well against targets that accumulate self-heat, and against ranged attackers reliant on heavy weapons.

Witch
Mech, Controller

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
12	8	12	8	-2	+1	+4	+0	0	5	15	12	1/2-1

Base systems:
Tear Down
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6
The Witch makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors**. On a success, the target takes **1/2/3 heat** immediately, and then a further **4 heat** at the start of the Witch's next turn; this effect does not stack. If an affected target or an adjacent hostile character takes the **Stabilize** action, they can choose to end the effect of this system in place of cooling their mech.

Blind
System, Full Tech, +2/4/6
The Witch makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target takes **2/3/4 heat** and must pass a **Systems** save or only be able to draw line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn. If the target succeeds, they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn instead. Characters in the **Danger Zone** make this save with **+1 Difficulty.**

Predatory Logic
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, +1 Accuracy, Recharge 6+
The Witch makes a tech attack against a hostile character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target immediately uses a **non-Superheavy** weapon chosen by the Witch to attack a character within **Range** also chosen by the Witch as a reaction. If the target takes the **Brace** reaction in response to this tech attack, they ignore the effect of this system; characters in the **Danger Zone** can't take the **Brace** reaction against this attack.

Blur

Trait
The Witch counts as **Invisible** against characters in the **Danger Zone.**

Optional systems:
Dark Cloud
Trait
The additional heat dealt by **Tear Down** on the Witch's next turn increases to **7 heat** if the target is in the **Danger Zone.**

Chain
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6
The Witch makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the Witch chains their target's systems to a space within **Range 3** of the target. If the target moves more than **3 spaces** from that point (voluntarily or otherwise), they take **2/3/4 heat** and become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn, but the effect ends. Otherwise, they are chained until the Witch is destroyed or **Stunned**, or until the end of the scene.

Petrify
System, Full Tech, +2/4/6
The Witch makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target becomes **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. When **Slowed** expires, they then become **Immobilized** until the end of their next turn. When **Immobilized** expires, they then become **Stunned** until the end of their next turn. Clearing any of these conditions (e.g. with **Stabilize**) prevents further conditions from occurring on subsequent turns.

This system can't be used again while it is currently in the process of affecting a character, and it can only be successfully used 1/scene on each character.

Pain Transference
Trait
Whenever a character takes additional heat dealt by **Tear Down** on the Witch's next turn, all other hostile characters within **Range 3** of that character also take the same amount of **heat.**

Immolate
System, Full Tech, +2/4/6, +1 Accuracy, Limited 1
The Witch makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target takes **burn** equal to their current **heat.** If the target is in the **Danger Zone**, all characters of the Witch's choice within a **Burst 2** area around the target must pass a **Systems** save or take half the amount of **burn** that the target takes. On a miss, the target takes **2 heat** and becomes **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
14	10	16	8	-2	+2	+5	+0	0	5	15	14	1/2-1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
16	12	20	8	-2	+3	+6	+0	0	5	15	16	1/2-1

Designer's Notes: The Witch is likely what most people think of when they think of a "controller," the ur-controller, tossing around debuffs and heat left and right. Its kit is loaded with dangerous and iconic abilities...everyone has a Predatory Logic story, everyone remembers the time a Dark Cloud empowered Tear Down blew out their reactor.

With that in mind, I wanted to keep the Witch rebake as close to that as possible, but with a more refined identity, and what better for the NPC that defines threatening people with heat than having it gain power against targets in the Danger Zone? All those Nuclear Cavaliers out there are about to have a real bad time.

The thing about the new Predatory Logic dynamic is that even using the core rulebook version, Bracing it still shuts it off, it just doesn't explicitly say so...Predatory Logic is an attack, you can Brace against it, and then the "can't use reactions" penalty kicks in, and since Predatory Logic's attack *is* a reaction, you're basically trading one set of bad outcomes (shooting an ally in the face) for another (the post-Brace hangover). This version clearly spells it out just so people know it can be done, then takes away your ability to do so if you're sitting in the Danger Zone. Likewise, Blur has gone from a relatively underwhelming trait (on-turn Invisibility is rarely a factor in Witch survivability) to something that can frustrate those strikers who like to run hot.

Petrify has received a big timing adjustment to its various stages so it flows more intuitively, and like Tear Down now has a way for players to clear it, giving them more incentive to do so. Pain Transference has been adjusted to hook into Tear Down specifically, and to do so passively, no longer requiring a one-two punch setup. In the base kit, Blind is no longer on a recharge to give the Witch a more robust set of core options, but now requires a full action versus the quick that it used to, albeit with a consolation prize.

But of course, the flashiest new addition is Immolate, a single-use ability to put the fear of heat in players from a different angle. Everyone thinks "what's the worst he's gonna do, hack me?" right up until their mech catches on fire.

Bespoke Grunts

Grunt
Variable

Grunts are specialized NPCs with the following rules:

Chaff
Grunts have **1 HP** and can't gain more, nor can they gain additional **Structure** or **Stress.** Unlike other characters, they never take damage when they succeed on a save – regardless of the weapon or system used – but otherwise take damage normally. They are immediately destroyed when they take any amount of heat.

Rank and File
Grunts can't take templates.

Necessary Modifications
During scenes which take place in zero-g environments, Grunts may deploy with modifications which allow them to move normally.

Mass Produced
Grunts all have the same Mech Skills and Core Stats; these may be modified by their type. When creating Grunts, choose which type they will be; **Artillery-Type, Controller-Type, Defender-Type, Striker-Type,** or **Support-Type.**

Grunt
Mech, Variable

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
1	8	8	N/A	0	0	0	0	0	4	10	10	1

Artillery-Type
Choose either the **DMR** or **Shoulder Mortar** weapon:

DMR
Main Rifle
Ordnance
+0, +1 Accuracy
Range 15
6/7/8 kinetic damage
This weapon gains **AP** against targets with **Lock On.**

Shoulder Mortar
Main Cannon
Arcing, Ordnance
+1/2/3, +1 Difficulty

Range 15, Blast 1
4/5/6 explosive damage
Targets with **Lock On** hit by this weapon take **+2 bonus damage.**

Survival Pistol
Auxiliary CQB
+1/2/3
Range 5, Threat 3
2/3/4 kinetic damage
The Artillery-Type can move **2 spaces** in any direction before or after attacking with this weapon. This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke **reactions.**

Reflex Targeting
Trait
The Artillery-Type has **+5 Sensors**, and may take the **Lock On** and **Search** actions before attacking with **Ordnance** weapons.

Controller-Type
Hostile Sync
System, Full Tech
Choose a hostile character within **Sensors.** While this ability is active, the Controller-Type is **Immobilized** but that character becomes **Impaired.** This effect lasts until the Controller-Type ends it as a **protocol** or until they are destroyed.

Destabilize
System, Quick Tech, +1/2/3
The Controller-Type makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, the target is **pushed 2 spaces** in any direction and must pass a **Systems** save or be knocked **Prone.**

Electro-Chaff
System, Quick Action, Limited 1
The Controller-Type creates an electro-chaff zone in a free **Blast 1** area within **Range 5** that lasts until the end of the scene. Hostile characters that start their turn in the area or move into it for the first time on their turn take **2/3/4 heat** and must pass a **Systems** save or become **Slowed** until the end of their next turn. A character can disperse this area by passing a **Systems** check as a quick action while adjacent to it.

Reinforced Systems
Trait
The Controller-Type has **+2 E-Defense** and ignores the first amount of **heat** they take during the scene.

Defender-Type
Shotgun
Main CQB
Knockback 2
+1/2/3
Range 5, Threat 3
4/5/6 kinetic damage

Interpose
Trait, Reaction, Limited 1
Trigger: An allied character adjacent to the Defender-Type is hit by a **non-Superheavy ranged or melee attack.**
Effect: That character gains **Resistance** to the triggering attack. The Defender-Type is then destroyed.

Ablative Armor
Trait
The Defender-Type is **Size 2**, and begins each combat with **3/4/5 Overshield.**

Guardian
Trait
Adjacent allied characters can use the Defender-Type for **hard cover.**

Striker-Type
Choose either the **Assault Rifle** or **Heavy Blade** weapon. If you choose **Heavy Blade**, the Striker-Type has **+2 Speed:**

Assault Rifle
Main Rifle
+1/2/3
Range 10
4/5/6 kinetic damage
On Critical Hit: The Striker-Type deals **+2 bonus damage** and may immediately **Boost** as a free action.

Heavy Blade
Heavy Melee
Knockback 1
+2/4/6
Threat 1
6/7/8 kinetic damage
On Critical Hit: The target must pass a **Hull** save or be knocked **Prone.**

Double Time
Trait, Protocol, Limited 1
The Striker-Type moves up to their **Speed** in any direction.

Assault Armor
Trait
The Striker-Type has **+2 Evasion** and **+1 Armor.**

Support-Type
Power Transmission
System, Full Action
An allied character within **Range 5** gains **+1 Accuracy** to all attacks, checks, and saves until the start of the Support-Type's next turn. This effect does not stack, and it immediately ends if the Support-Type is destroyed.

Recon Drones
System, Full Action
A hostile character within **Sensors** gains **Lock On**, then an allied character within **Sensors** may move **2 spaces** in any direction.

Stabilizer Drones
System, Quick Action, Limited 1
An allied character within **Sensors** gains **3/4/5 Overshield** and clears **Impaired** and **Slowed.**

At higher levels:
Tier II:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
1	9	9	N/A	+1	+1	+1	+1	0	4	10	12	1

Tier III:

HP	Evade	E-D	Heat	H	A	S	E	Armor	Spd	Sense	Save	Size
1	10	10	N/A	+2	+2	+2	+2	0	4	10	14	1

Designer's Notes: The biggest fundamental issue with the Grunt template is that it's simultaneously meant to encapsulate 30+ distinct NPC classes, none of which were designed with "being grunts" in mind. This makes creating and assigning grunts to an OPFOR a much more difficult task than many GMs assume, which inevitably leads to the extremely common occurrence where a new GM goes "oh, Assault Grunts, I can use these as filler" and adds a half dozen of them, unaware that what they've actually created is a distributed Assault that gets to shoot six times per round.

Grunts, as a unit type in tactical games, are intended to serve the purpose of pulling player attention in different directions, spreading out the number of potential threats they have to deal with across a wider area and diffusing their attacks by drawing them into weaker targets that, if left alone, will nonetheless pose a persistent problem. But the problem is that if those grunts hit just as hard as standard NPCs, it can be difficult to strike the right balance, especially when your prospective grunt pool runs the gamut from units with more modest damage all the way up to high-damage strikers and artillery units.

In my experience, grunts and similar enemy types are better served being designed specifically for that purpose, and so that's what these bespoke Grunts are for. Completely self-contained units built for the specific purpose of Being Grunts, no worrying about which of several dozen NPC classes to gruntify, no worrying about whether or not you should use optional systems, you pick the grunt for the role you want, you make at most one choice if it's one of the ones that has an either-or build decision, and off you go.

This does mean you don't have the potential breadth of variety that Grunt as a template gives you, but my personal opinion is that the value in that choice is often illusory, that a lot of the NPC classes don't really make for great grunts, which is understandable because they weren't really meant to be. And handling grunts this way massively simplifies and streamlines OPFOR creation, which I feel more than makes up for it.

I would still apply these bespoke Grunts judiciously, probably not deviating far from the core

rulebook's evaluation of Grunts in an OPFOR as being worth roughly 0.33 to 0.5 of a normal NPC when it comes to budgeting. Extra bodies and extra actions still have a weight of their own, and even with more deliberately bounded damage and to-hit values, they aren't something I would overuse any more than I would overuse any other non-Grunt NPC.

Revised Templates

Veteran

Template Features:

Reinforced
Template Feature
The Veteran gains **+1 Structure** and **+1 Stress.**

Veterancy
Template Feature
The Veteran gains **+1 Accuracy** on all checks and saves for one **mech skill** (chosen at creation): **Hull, Agility, Systems,** or **Engineering.**

Limitless
Template Feature
The Veteran can **Overcharge.** Instead of the standard cost, they always gain **1d6 heat.**

Veteran Traits
Template Feature
The Veteran gains either a **General Veteran Trait** or the **Class Veteran Trait** corresponding to their NPC class.

General Veteran Traits:

Feign Death
Trait
The first time that the Veteran is destroyed each combat, they are actually feigning death - they appear to be destroyed, but have **1 HP.** Characters adjacent to the Veteran can reveal this with a successful **Systems** check or **pilot skill check**; otherwise, the Veteran remains unnoticed until they move or take action.

Lesser Sight
Trait
The Veteran ignores **Invisible** for characters within **Range 3**, and hostile characters in **Range 3** can't **Hide** (though they remain **Hidden** if they were already).

Lightning Reflexes
Trait
Whenever the Veteran is attacked using any **Heavy** or **Superheavy** weapon, first roll **1d6.** On **5+**, the attack automatically misses. This effect does not stack with **Invisible.**

Parting Gift
Trait, Quick Action
The Veteran can **Self-Destruct** (see *Lancer* p.72).

Self Repair
Trait, Full Action

1/scene, the Veteran regains all **HP** and clears all **conditions** that weren't caused by their own systems, etc.

Class Veteran Traits:

Ace
Air Superiority
Trait
1/round, when the Ace hits a hostile character with a ranged attack, that character must pass an **Agility** save or immediately land if **flying** (this counts as falling without any damage), and additionally become unable to fly or take **reactions** until the end of their next turn.

Aegis
Mobile Emitter
Trait
The Aegis is **Slowed** while **Defense Net** is active instead of **Immobilized** (this can't be cleared or prevented by **Regenerative Shielding**).

Archer
Rock and Roll
Trait
As a **protocol**, the Archer may choose to become **Immobilized** until the start of their next turn. If they do, **Suppress** can be used against two targets instead of one and **Moving Target** may be used **2/round.** Each target triggers and resolves **Moving Target** separately, and a target damaging the Archer only ends the effect of **Suppress** on that target.

Assault
Commando
Trait
The Assault may move **2 spaces** before or after attacking with the **Combat Knife.** This movement ignores engagement and doesn't provoke reactions. The **Combat Knife** gains **Thrown 5**, and when thrown automatically returns to the Assault at the end of their turn.

Assassin
Whirling Death
Trait
Whenever the Assassin reduces a hostile mech to **0 HP** (causing **structure damage** or destroying them), they may immediately choose a new target for **Assassin's Mark.**

Barricade
Remote Assemblers
Trait
When the Barricade uses **Mobile Printer**, it can print cubes out to **Range 10.**

Bastion
Close Protection
Trait
Characters benefiting from **Guardian's hard cover** or being protected by **Friendly Interdiction** may use the Bastion's **Armor** instead of their own whenever they take damage.

Berserker
Rending Cleave
Trait
On hit with the **Chain Axe**, the Berserker deals **2/3/4 kinetic damage** to a different character adjacent to either the target or the Berserker.

Bombard
Danger Close
Trait
When the Bombard makes an attack with the **Bombard Cannon**, they may exclude one character of their choice in the area from the attack.

Breacher
Leadwall
Trait
Whenever the Breacher misses all attacks with the **Dual Shotguns**, it may make one additional attack for free.

Cataphract
Crashing Charge
Trait
The Cataphract may push characters affected by **Trample 1 space** in any direction.

Demolisher
Heavy Tread
Trait
All other characters treat a **Burst 2** area around the Demolisher as **difficult terrain.**

Engineer
Turret Nest
Trait
All **Deployable Turrets** within **Range 3** of the Engineer gain **soft cover.** While the Engineer is within **Range 3** of four or more turrets, they also gain **soft cover.**

Goliath
Oppression
Trait
When the Goliath uses **Crush Targeting**, they may affect every hostile character within **Sensors.** If they do, affected characters only take **+1 Difficulty** to attacks instead of **+3.**

Hive
Abrade
Trait
1/round, on a hit with the **Hunter-Killer Nexus**, the Hive may force the target must pass a **Systems** save or become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn.

Hornet
Acrobat
Trait

Any time an attack misses the Hornet, they may move up to **2 spaces** in any direction as a **reaction.**

Mirage
Sensor Lag
Trait
1/round, whenever the Mirage **teleports** an allied character, the Mirage may **teleport 3 spaces** in any direction as well.

Operator
Spec Ops
Trait
The Operator is equipped with an NHP co-pilot and gains the **AI** tag. Their mech is autonomous and can even function without a pilot. This NHP ignores **cascade** and grants the Operator **Immunity** to **Impaired.** The Operator's pilot can also **Dismount.** While on foot, the pilot uses the **Human** class and can take all actions available to PC pilots, including **Jockey.** When the Operator is destroyed, the pilot can immediately **Eject** before **Self-Erasure** (bringing the NHP with them).

Priest
Power Rerouting
Trait
Characters linked to the Priest with **Investiture** can **Overcharge.** Instead of the usual cost, the Priest takes **1d6 heat.**

Pyro
White Hot
Trait
The **Flamethrower** does **+2 heat** on hit.

Rainmaker
Concussion Warheads
Trait
1/round, when the Rainmaker consumes **Lock On** as part of a successful attack with the **Missile Pods**, they may knock the target **Prone.**

Ronin
Angled Deflection
Trait
When the Ronin uses **Rebound**, on a roll of **4+** they may choose to have the attacker repeat the attack against themselves or against another hostile character within **Range 3** of the attacker.

Scourer
Thermal Dissipation
Trait
Whenever **Cooling Module** activates, the Scourer creates a **Burst 2** area of **soft cover** around themselves that lasts until the start of their next turn.

Scout
Tactical Reposition
Trait

When the Scout uses **Cloaking Field,** up to two allied characters within the affected area may immediately move their **Speed** to any other free spaces within the affected area. This movement ignores engagement and does not provoke **reactions.**

Seeder
Mag Mines
Trait
Whenever one of the Seeder's mines is detonated by a hostile character, they may move all of their other deployed mines up to **2 spaces** towards the hostile character nearest to them; if two or more hostile characters are equally close to a mine, the Seeder chooses one. All mines must end this movement in free spaces.

Sentinel
Eye of the Storm
Trait
When **Eye of Midnight** is active, the Sentinel may attack with both the **Combat Shotgun** and **Retractable Sword** each time it takes the **Overwatch** reaction.

Sniper
Blinding Laser
Trait
Whenever a character gains the **Sniper's Mark**, the Sniper may force them to pass a **Systems** save. If they fail, they become **Impaired** and **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Specter
Silent Stalker
Trait
The Specter can become **Hidden** while **Engaged**, and while **Hidden** can move through (but not stop in) spaces occupied by hostile characters.

Support
Whitewash Coordinator
Trait
When the Support uses **Sealant Gun** on an allied character, it does not cause them to become **Slowed.** When used on a hostile character, the target is also knocked **Prone** if they fail the **Agility** save.

Witch
Enfeeble
Trait
When the Witch uses the **Invade Quick Tech** action, on hit the target is also **Slowed** until the end of their next turn.

Designer's Notes: I don't care for the Veteran template. So much of it is full of weird, unwieldy, niche, and sometimes unfun options that I end up falling back on the same handful of choices over and over. There is rarely if ever a time I find myself wanting to give an NPC an NHP co-pilot that does nothing, nor do I feel like being rude to the auxiliary weapon users in the party by giving someone Steel Jaw out of nowhere. I also find the way it scales by tier to be awkward and often unnecessary.

The impetus behind this revised version of the Veteran template was both to create more interesting options, but also to do away with the experience of "poring over a list of choices and trying to decide which one I actually want." Originally, this template was *just* the class-specific traits (plus Limitless) which would have made applying it as easy as "pick the template and check which trait you get, done," but I felt that adding a few general options would flesh things out just enough to keep it from feeling one-note or too niche.

I like the idea of class-specific upgrades, as it gives Veteran units more of a unique identity rather than feeling cut from the same cloth. It also helps keeps things focused on upgrades that those NPCs in particular stand to benefit from more than being tossed a bunch of random building blocks and told to figure it out yourself. Should the Hacker trait go on the Witch, or is that too much hacker per hacker? Will Headshot be too annoying on this NPC, or too useless? With all the other decisions GMs have to make when building an OPFOR, I don't think the core rulebook Veteran template provides sufficient payoff for the amount of extra effort it often involves.

Baking Limitless into the base template was done for two reasons. First, this version of Veteran no longer scales by tier, and so giving every Veteran one additional base trait helps make up for that, and second, I think Limitless is a good trait at providing texture to NPCs. It gives Veterans a dash of additional action econ in a way that's distinct from Elites, more condensed into a single turn but not as broad as having two entire activations, and it applies self-heat in the process, which creates situations that players can respond to and exploit.

Ultra

Template Features:

Best of the Best
Template Feature
The Ultra can't take the **Elite** or **Grunt** templates.

Resilient
Template Feature
The Ultra gains **+5 HP.**

Reinforced
Template Feature
The Ultra gains **+3 Structure** and **+3 Stress.**

Shock and Awe
Template Feature
The Ultra takes **two separate turns** each round. They regain spent **reactions** each time they take a turn. If the Ultra is facing **five or more** hostile characters when combat begins, the Ultra takes a **third turn** each round.

Deadly
Template Feature
The Ultra deals **+1d6 bonus damage** on **critical hits.**

Juggernaut
Template Feature
At the start of the Ultra's turn, they may clear one condition. If they do, they choose one:

- Become **Impaired** until the end of their turn.
- Take **5 energy damage** that can't be reduced in any way.
- Instead of **two quick actions or a full action** during their turn, they may only take **one quick action.**

Auto-Repair Functions
Template Feature
At the end of the Ultra's turn, they may repair one destroyed weapon or system of their choice. If they do, they choose one:

- Become **Jammed** until the start of their next turn
- Take **1d6 heat.**

Legendary
Template Feature
The Ultra rolls all **structure damage and overheating checks** twice and chooses either result.

Reflex
Template Feature
The Ultra can **Overwatch** unlimited times per round.

Advanced Kit
Template Feature
The Ultra chooses 1-2 additional optional systems from their class.

Ultra Systems and Traits
Template Feature

The Ultra chooses 1-3 options from the **Ultra Systems and Traits** list.

Ultra Systems and Traits:

Aceso Flock
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
Up to two allied characters within **Range 5** gain **4/5/6 Overshield**, and while they have this **Overshield** they have **Immunity** to **Impaired** and **Jammed** (clearing those conditions if they already have them).

All-Theater EX Suite
System
The Ultra can **hover** whenever they move.

Grind Maniple
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6
The Ultra makes a tech attack against a character within **Sensors.** On a success, a swarm of tiny, hard to hit drones clamp onto the target, causing them to take **2 burn** each time they take any action or **reaction** until the end of their next turn.

Harbinger Rockets
System, Full Action, Recharge 6+
The Ultra launches a salvo of powerful rockets, targeting one space of their choice occupied by each hostile non-**Drone** character within **Range 30** and line of sight; all characters know that these spaces have been chosen. At the end of the next round, these rockets impact, creating a **Blast 2** explosion centered on each targeted space. Characters in these affected areas must pass an **Agility** save or take **10/14/18 explosive damage** and become **Shredded** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they take half damage only.

H0R_OS v?? Puppet Crasher
System, Quick Tech, +2/4/6, Recharge 5+
The Ultra makes a tech attack against a hostile character within **Sensors.** On a success, they take **2/3/4 heat**, gain **Lock On**, become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn, and move their **Speed** in a direction of the Ultra's choice. This movement is involuntary, but provokes **reactions** and Engagement as normal and doesn't count as **Knockback**, pushing, or pulling.

Ontolotactical Array
System, Limited 6
Whenever an allied character within **Range 10** attempts an attack roll, check, or save, the Ultra may grant them additional **Accuracy** on that roll by expending charges from this system; this doesn't take an action, but can't be used if the Ultra is **Jammed** or **Stunned.** Up to **2 charges** can be expended per roll this way. The Ultra regains **1 charge** each time they end their turn without having made any attacks or forced any saves, and each time they take **stress or structure damage**, to a maximum of **6.**

Orbital Eye
System, Quick Tech, Recharge 5+
All hostile characters in a **Blast 2** area within **Sensors** gain **Lock On.**

Repulsion Field
System

When hostile characters start their turn adjacent to the Ultra or become adjacent to the Ultra for the first time on their turn, they take **2/3/4 AP energy damage** and must pass a **Systems** save or be knocked back **2 spaces** and become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Sidereal Realignment
System, Quick Tech
Up to three characters within **Sensors** are pulled **1 space** in any direction of your choice. Characters that have one or more conditions (**Impaired, Slowed**, etc) may be pulled **2 spaces** instead.

Siege Shield
System
This system replaces **Resilient.** The Ultra gains **Resistance** to all damage from attacks that originate beyond **Range 3.**

Slivershielding
System
This system replaces **Resilient.** The Ultra becomes permanently **Invisible.**

Short-Cycle Lance
System, Full Action
This powerful lance weapon automatically begins charging during the Ultra's turn, which is visible to all characters. Set a **Charge Die, 1d6**, starting at **6**. At the start of each of the Ultra's turns, reduce the value of the **Charge Die** by **1**, then roll **1d6** as though this system was **Recharge 5+**: on **5+**, reduce the value by another **1.** The value is also reduced by **1** each time the Ultra takes **stress or structure damage.**

When the **Charge Die** reaches **1**, the Ultra may reset it to **6** and, as a **full action**, draw a **Line 30** path. All sources of cover, terrain, objects, and deployables smaller than **Size 5** are completely annihilated, and then all characters within the affected area must pass an **Agility** save or take **1 structure damage.** On a success, they are reduced to **1 HP.**

Suppression Pulse
System, Quick Tech, Recharge 6+
All hostile characters in a **Blast 2** area within **Sensors** must pass a **Systems** save or become **Jammed** until the end of their next turn. On a success, they become **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Volley Module
System, Full Action
The Ultra adopts a stable stance and prepares one of their weapons. On their next turn, as a **protocol**, the Ultra uses the prepared weapon to attack any number of characters once, as long as they are within **Range**, and aren't in cover or **Prone.** All characters are aware of this attack and can choose to drop **Prone** as a **free action** on their turn to avoid being targeted.

Wolfhound Missile
System, Drone, Quick Action, Recharge 6+
Wolfound Missile (**Size** 1/2, **HP** 10/12/14, **Evasion** 10, **E-Defense** 10, **Tags: Drone, Immunity to Prone, Slowed, and Immobilized**).

The Ultra deploys the Wolfound Missile in an adjacent space and picks a target in **Range 30** and line of

sight. At the start of the Ultra's turns the missile makes its own standard move, **flying 4 spaces** towards its target, **8** if the target has **Lock On.** It moves directly, maneuvering around cover and terrain if needed. When the missile moves adjacent to its target, or collides with any character, it creates a **Burst 2 explosion.** Characters in the affected area must pass an **Agility** save or take **14/20/28 explosive damage.** On a success, they take half damage.

Any hostile character that attempts to move a Wolfound Missile (i.e. with **Knockback**, push, pull, etc) must pass a contested **Systems** check against the Ultra. If they fail, the movement is ignored, and the missile immediately moves another **4 spaces** towards its target.

Argus Armor
Trait
The Ultra has **6 Armor** instead of its normal value. Each time they roll a **structure damage or overheating check**, they lose **2 Armor** to a minimum of **0.** While at **0 Armor**, the Ultra gains **+1 Accuracy** on all attacks.

Devastator
Trait
1/round, when the Ultra makes a successful attack, they may deal **30 AP explosive damage** to an object or piece of terrain within line of sight. All characters adjacent to that object or piece of terrain take **3/4/5 kinetic damage.**

Greater Sight
Trait
The Ultra ignores **Invisible** for characters within **Range 10**, and hostile characters in **Range 10** can't **Hide** (though they remain **Hidden** if they were already). As a **quick action 1/round**, a character can engage in a contested **Systems** check with the Ultra to attempt to disable this trait; all characters are aware of this. The Ultra must be within their **Sensors** for them to attempt this check. If they succeed, this trait is disabled until the end of the Ultra's next turn. If they fail, that character gains **Lock On** and becomes **Impaired** until the end of their next turn.

Evasive
Trait
The Ultra gains **+4 Evasion** (to a maximum of **20**), **+1 Accuracy** on all saves, and **-1 Structure.**

Legion
Trait
The Ultra gains **+4 E-Defense** (to a maximum of **20**) and **+1 Accuracy** on all **tech attacks.**

Limitless
Trait
The Ultra can **Overcharge.** Instead of the standard cost, they always gain **1d6 heat.**

Superior Shielding
Trait
This trait replaces **Resilient.** At the start of the Ultra's turn, the Ultra chooses one damage type - **kinetic, explosive, or energy damage** - and gains **Resistance** to that damage until the start of their next turn. The Ultra can't gain **Resistance** to more than two of these damage types at a time, whether from this or any other system.

Superior Construction
Trait
The Ultra gains **+5 HP.** When using **Juggernaut**, the Ultra may clear two conditions at a time instead of one. Different costs must be chosen for each condition cleared this way.

Superior Frame
Trait
When using **Juggernaut**, the Ultra may clear either **Slowed** or **Immobilized** by taking **4 heat** instead of the usual costs.

Superior Reactor
Trait
While the Ultra is **Exposed**, all attacks against them are made with **+1 Difficulty.** Whenever the Ultra takes **kinetic, explosive, or energy damage** while **Exposed**, they clear **Exposed** immediately afterward and clear all **heat.**

Supreme Logistics
Trait, Quick Action
1/turn as a **quick action**, the Ultra may either repair a destroyed weapon or system belonging to them or an adjacent ally, or reload one **Loading** weapon belonging to them or an adjacent ally.

Supreme Melee
Trait, Free Action
1/turn as a **free action**, the Ultra may **Grapple** or **Ram.** The Ultra counts as **1 Size** larger for the purpose of grapples (up to a maximum of **Size 3**), and on a successful **Ram** they knock targets back **2 spaces** instead of **1.**

Supreme Mobility
Trait, Free Action
1/turn as a **free action**, the Ultra may **Boost.** One allied character they start this **Boost** adjacent to may immediately **Boost** as a **reaction.**

Unstoppable
Trait
The Ultra gains **Immunity** to **Prone**, and may ignore involuntary movement (**Knockback**, push, pull, etc) by taking **1 kinetic damage** per point of movement ignored; this damage can't be reduced in any way.

Hellfire Projector
Heavy CQB
+1/2/3
Cone 5
3 energy damage + 4/5/6 burn
Attacks with this weapon create up to two **Cone 5** areas, which cannot overlap.

HyperDense Blade
Heavy Melee
Knockback 2, Reliable 2/3/4

+2/4/6
Threat 2
6/7/8 kinetic damage
On Critical Hit: The target is knocked **Prone**, and the Ultra can make another attack with this weapon against a different target within range. Only one additional attack can be made this way per turn.

If the Ultra adopts a stabilized stance as a **protocol** and becomes **Immobilized** until the start of their next turn, attacks with this weapon gain **+1 Accuracy** and deal double **Knockback** on hit.

Miniaturized Railgun
Heavy Rifle
AP, Ordnance
+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
Line 10
6/7/8 kinetic damage
The Ultra may ignore **Ordnance** when attacking with this weapon. If they do, it gains **4 Heat (Self)** and makes attacks with **+1 Difficulty.**

Nova Missiles
Auxiliary Launcher
Seeking
+1/2/3
Range 15, Blast 1
4/6/8 energy damage
If the Ultra does not make any other attacks during their turn, they may attack with this weapon at the end of their turn as a **free action.**

Ravager Turret
Heavy Cannon
+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
Range 10
4/5/6 kinetic damage
This weapon attacks every hostile character within line of sight and **Range.**

Wraith Nexus
Main Nexus
Smart
+1/2/3, +1 Accuracy
Range 10
3/4/5 energy damage
On Critical Hit: The target must pass a **Systems** save, or the Ultra chooses one:

- The target becomes **Slowed** until the end of their next turn
- The target becomes **Shredded** until the end of their next turn
- The target only has line of sight to adjacent spaces until the end of their next turn.

Designer's Notes: The *pièce de résistance* of this project, the Ultra is undeniably one of the most evocative elements a GM can add to their OPFOR. The Ultra is, after all, supposed to be a foe on par

with the PCs, if not strictly mechanically than narratively and in terms of vibes, and to fulfill that role they're decked out to the nines with all sorts of bells and whistles, many of which are designed to help ensure that they don't immediately eat shit and die upon contact with the players.

It's worth noting that Ultras are *not* raid bosses. An Ultra isn't intended, nor designed, to be able to withstand an entire PC squad on their own, and this revised template doesn't attempt to alter that dynamic in any fashion.

That said, my feelings on the core rulebook's Ultra template can be boiled down to two broad points:

- There are too many Ultra traits which grant it immunity to various status debuffs on top of it inherently automatically clearing such conditions for free. While wanting the Ultra, a significant chunk of the OPFOR budget, to not get hard crowd-controlled into irrelevance is understandable, layered immunities and auto-clears wind up creating a situation where player tactics are overtly encouraged to begin and end with "just shoot it until it's dead." This makes choosing such optionals a tricky proposition, as the wrong one can lead to a boring or unenjoyable fight without intending to.

- The majority of the Ultra's optional systems, traits, and weapons are focused around Defender- and Striker-type options...more guns, more defenses, more immunities, that sort of thing, without much in the way of support for other NPC types or roles. Sure, you can make an Ultra Witch, but you don't really get a extra witchy Witch out of the deal so much as a Witch that has damage resistance or a big gun or something.

And so these are the primary issues that this revised Ultra template looks to address. For the first part, virtually all of the various "the Ultra gains Immunity to X and Y" traits are gone, replaced by traits which hook into an equally revised Juggernaut template feature. The Ultra can still automatically clear conditions, but now has to pick a cost to do so, some self-damage or downgrading the condition to Impaired or losing some of their actions, and they have additional traits that can expand on this in various ways. This means that Ultras can still shrug off nasty conditions like Jammed or Shredded or even Stunned, but the players will still accomplish *something* with those debuffs.

The idea here is to promote more of a feeling of interactivity and reward a variety of tactics and abilities beyond just raw damage (or raw heat), and to make it feel less like a dick move on the GM's end to explore the breadth of options on offer.

It's worth noting that this does, objectively, mean that this version of the Ultra is less "powerful," unable to easily shrug off as much stuff without cost or consequence, but this simply means that the point about Ultras not being solo boss fight material should be kept in mind when designing an OPFOR around an Ultra. The flipside is that without as many punitive hard-immunity type traits, GMs should ideally feel more confident in being able to pick what options they please and play as hard as those options allow for. Keep these adjustments in mind so you're not caught going "wow this seems like a nerf compared to my usual Tier 3 Supreme Melee Extra Deadly Ronin."

On the subject of the revised Juggernaut: taking Impaired as a cost for clearing a condition does mean that certain Ultras will be able to do so with much less consequence. Ultras that don't make many attacks, for example, or that rely more on things like passive abilities or saves, will be able to do so without losing much. Plus there's the RPV template which applies permanent Impaired, or the Aegis which is immune to Impaired. Can you combo these with the new Juggernaut and always slam-pick

Impaired as the cost for clearing conditions? Yes, though at this point the outcome isn't really meaningfully much different from a core rulebook Ultra in terms of condition clear, and still notably different in terms of things like destroyed weapon/system repair, to say nothing of other factors. If you decide you want every Ultra you make from now on to be an RPV and/or Aegis, that's up to you, though I think it'll make your Ultra battles a bit one-note. Regardless, "these specific sorts of Ultras are more condition-resistant" is, in my opinion, still a significant step up from "all Ultras are this condition-resistant," and you can even look at it as a factor that adds more differentiation to various types of Ultra.

To the second bullet point, I've added more options to the Ultra in general, many of them focused on Controller- and Support-type systems and effects. Grind Maniple makes its reappearance, parted out from the Hive, alongside a host of new tech attack and utility options. New systems like Harbinger Rockets and Ontolotactical Array give the Ultra brand new capabilities that can significantly alter their role in a fight, while old standbys like the Short-Cycle Lance have been reworked to be a bit more dynamic and a bit less "the GM rolled hot on their recharge rolls and fired the SCL three times in a row."

Along the way, a few other Ultra traits have been removed or reworked, mainly those dealing with making the Ultra hit harder or attack more, such as Extra Deadly or Supreme Melee. These traits have always been things that require the GM to walk a tightrope when it comes to balance...put Supreme Melee on an actual melee striker and it can quickly scale out of control, but put it on a less suitable unit and it can feel superfluous. As for Extra Deadly, I'm just not really a big fan of "the Ultra does even more damage at random intervals than it already does." I think it's okay for that to not be a thing.

There are also an expanded selection of Ultra-specific weapons to choose from. A lot of optional weapons have been removed from various NPC rebake selections, and so fleshing out the Ultra weapon catalogue felt like a good way to reincorporate that sort of thing (aside from cross-classing, of course). Nothing makes players sit up and take notice than seeing that this enemy, unlike the others, is also carrying a big sword.